Commentary

Volume Sixty-seven, Number Four, April 1979

SELLING THEM THE ROPE
Business & the Soviets
Carl Gershman

Zionism vs. Anti-Semitism — Jacob Katz

Europe—The Good News and the Bad — Michael Ledeen

An Extraordinary Catholic Childhood — Saul Friedländer

Writing About Oneself — Alfred Kazin

Arab Money and the Universities — Seth Cropsey

FICTION: **Imaginings of Africa** — Pearl K. Bell

MOVIES: **A New Patriotism?** — Richard Grenier

LETTERS: **The Issue of Homosexuality** — Samuel McCracken and Critics

BOOKS: Kenneth S. Lynn / Erich Isaac / Hilton Kramer / John Starrels / Peter Shaw / David Gress

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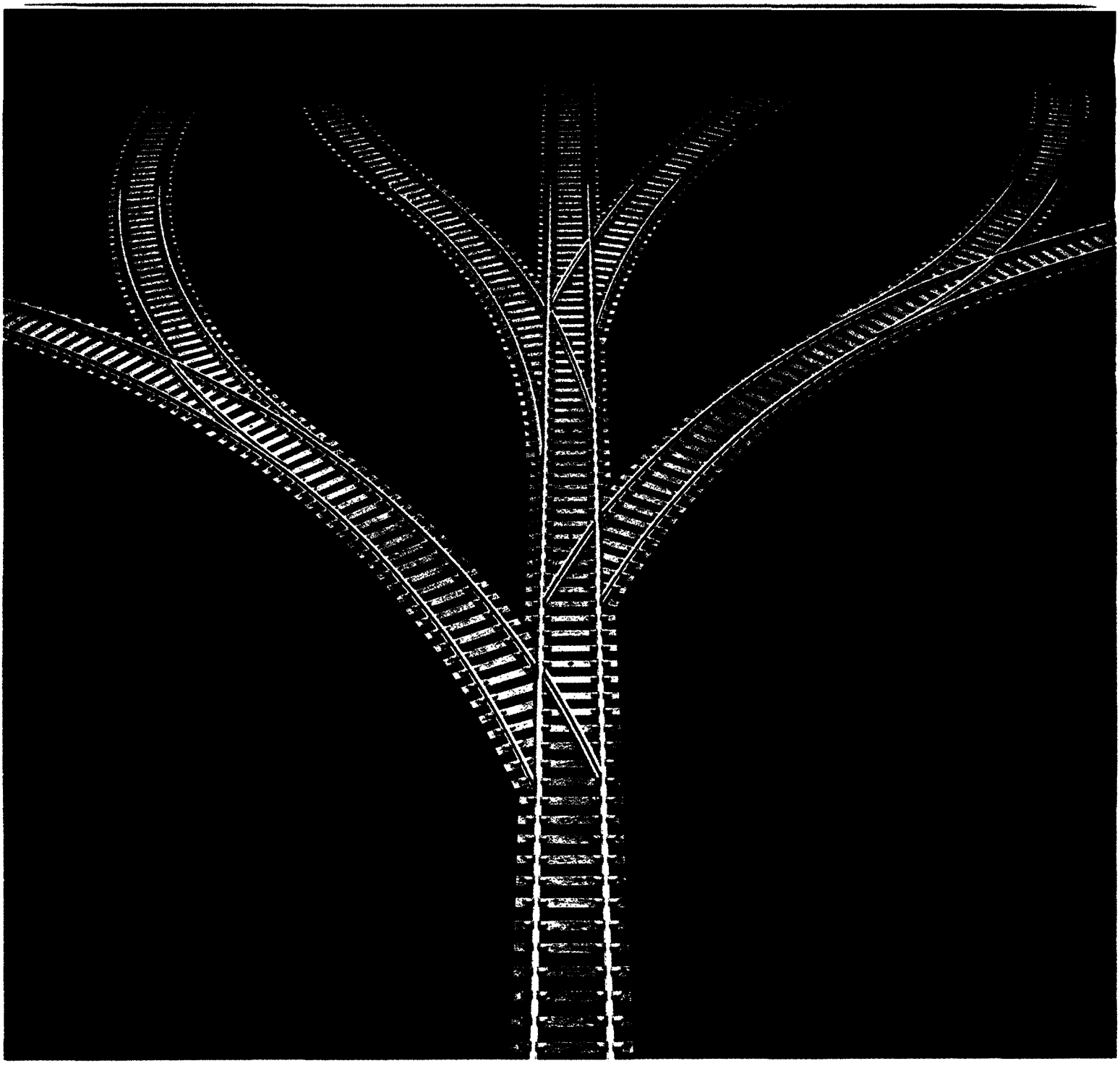

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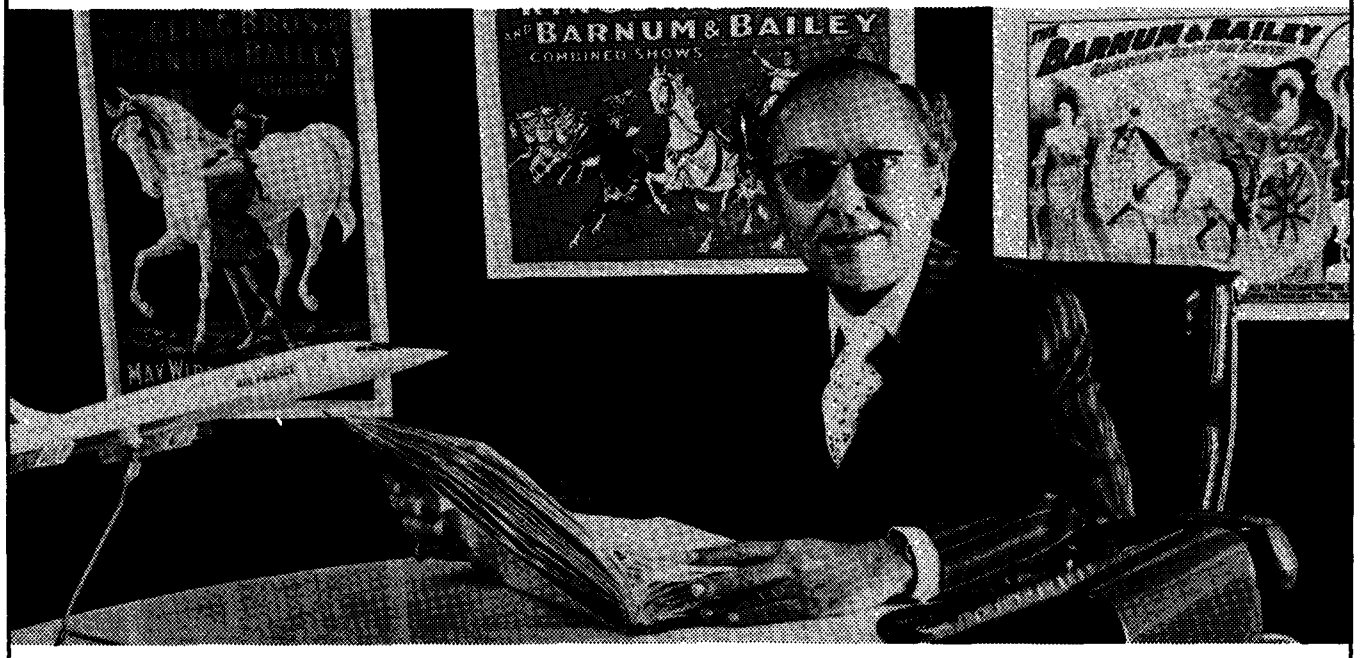

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BACK
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Commentary

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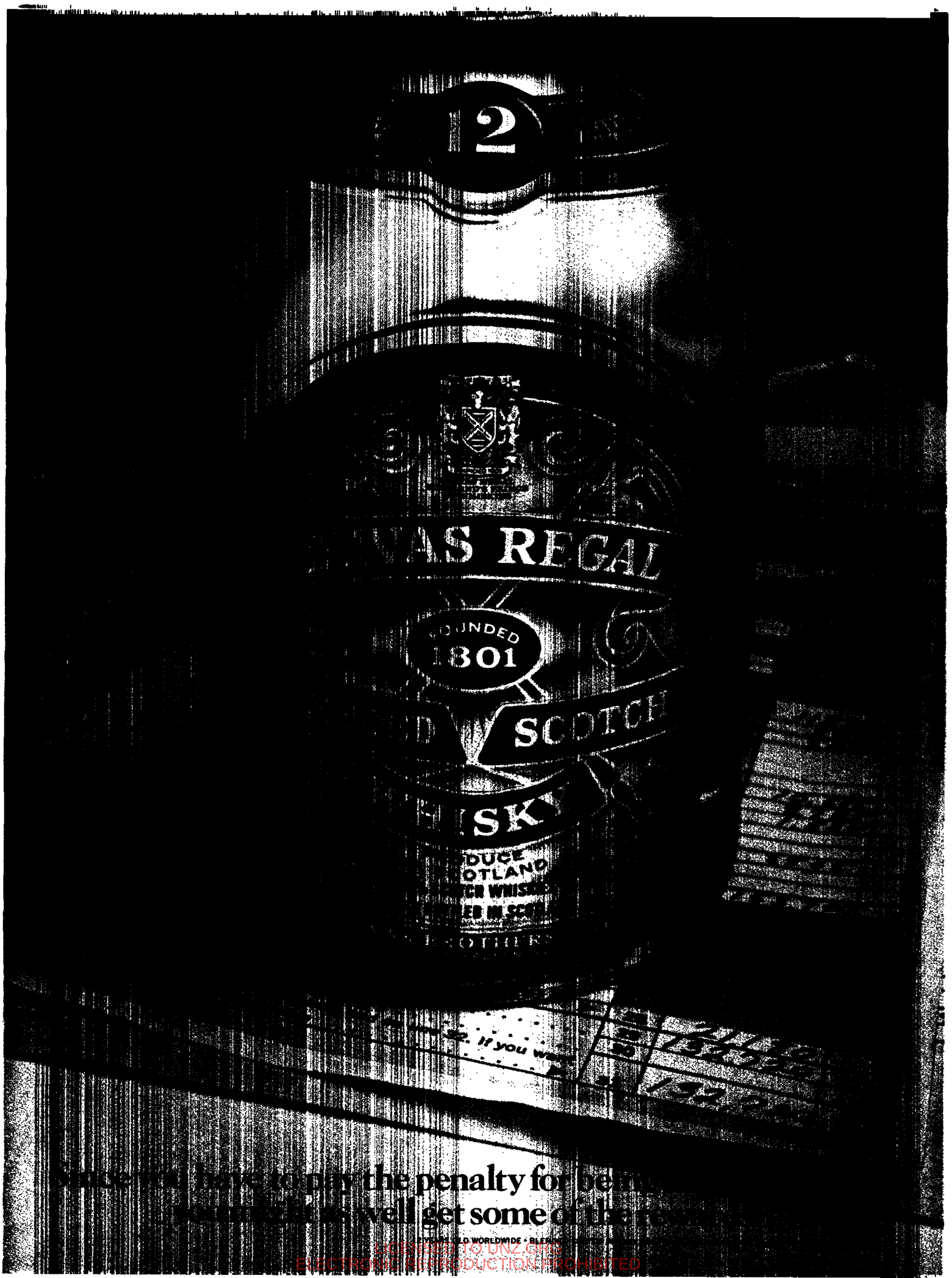

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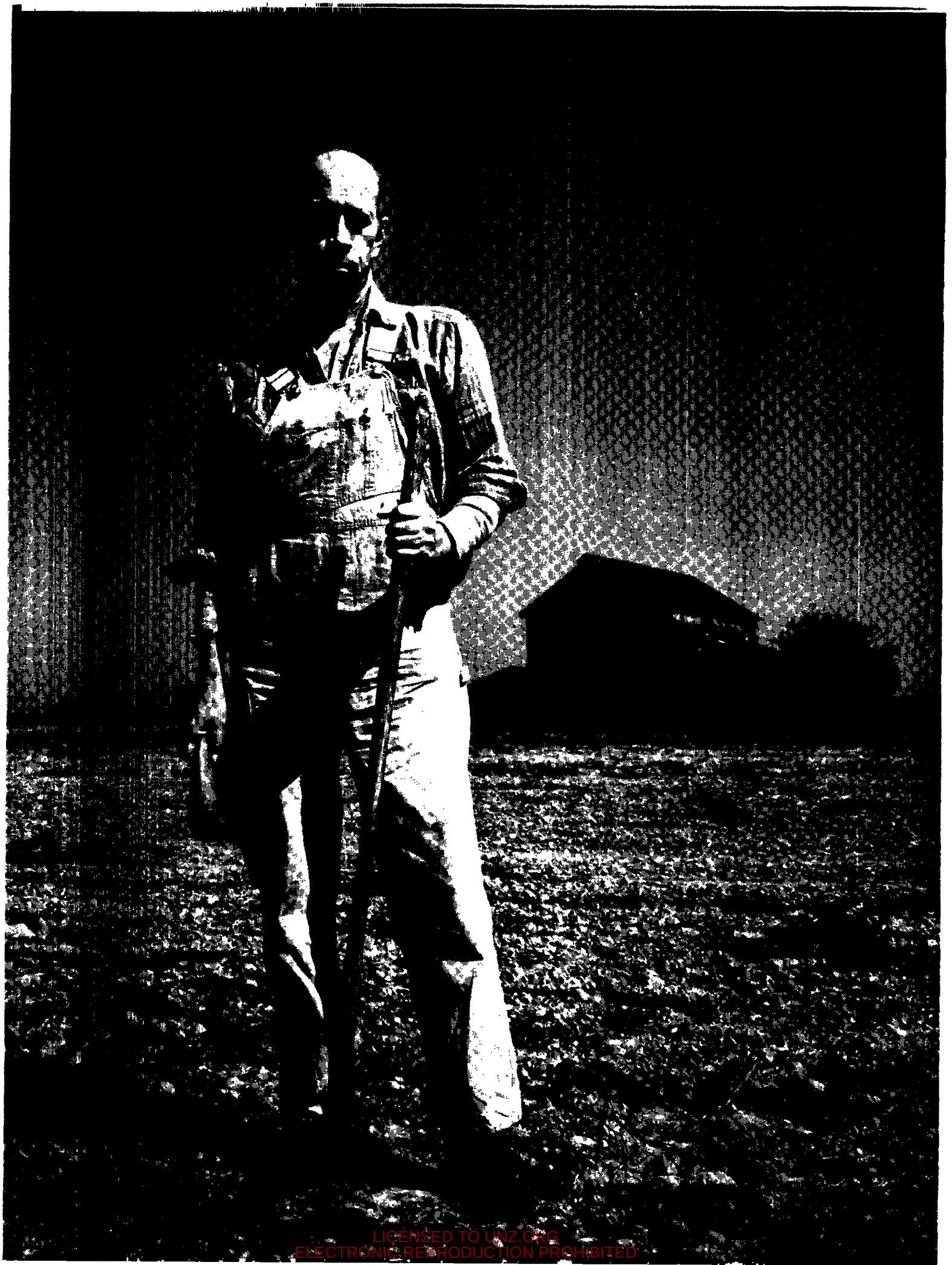

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Letters from Readers

The Issue of Homosexuality

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Samuel McCracken's "Are Homosexuals Gay?" [January] is marvelous: a brilliant work of both exposition and analysis. . . .

JOSEPH ADELSON
Department of Psychology
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"Are Homosexuals Gay?" is a splendidly written and particularly timely statement. It identifies, in necessarily condensed form, most of the major issues that are involved, though seldom discussed, in the controversy over homosexuals' claims for the naturalness and social legitimacy of their sexual behavior.

I would like to add two points that generally seem to be overlooked in the debate concerning whether or not homosexuals should be permitted to teach pre-adolescents and those entering and still in puberty. While gender identity seems to be formed in the first several years of life, its development is a matter of degree. Some children approach puberty with a rather shaky emotional sense of their gender identity. While it is unlikely that they will *model* themselves on homosexual teachers, they need support to assure them of the "rightness" of their heterosexual feelings. To be told that homosexuality is "learned," "optional," "acceptable," and the like will surely confuse them. Children at this age need clarity of standards concerning this very fundamental aspect of life.

What may be even worse than adolescents "tipping" into homosexuality because of emotional insecurities and as a result of learning that homosexuality is only "different," is the acceptance by stable heterosexual adolescents of the views propounded by homosexuals in their ardent endeavors to legitimize their sexual activities. When these adolescents become parents, they may then be indifferent to the gender-identity development of their own children, and thus their children will experience all the psychic and other costs Mr. McCracken so aptly describes. . . .

EDWARD M. LEVINE
Department of Sociology
Loyola University
Evanston, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The publication of Samuel McCracken's stunning article demonstrates that it is *not* illegal, or even the violation of some exceedingly strong taboo, for a non-scientific journal to publish a piece on homosexuality that is not self-refuting nonsense. The publication of Mr. McCracken's article strengthens a weakening faith that sense does, at least in the long run, expose ideology.

Mr. McCracken makes one point, however, that calls for more discussion than was possible in his article, given the subject's tangential relevance to his main argument. He refers to transsexualism as the ultimate rejection of reality. In one sense he is no doubt correct; transsexualism is a rejection of anatomy and the socialization that is determined by that anatomy. But it is worth remembering that the role of physiological influences on behavior is relevant to an assessment of whether the behavior represents acceptance or rejection.

When we refer to a person as a male or female, we refer to a person whose chromosomal, hormonal, anatomical, and social developments are all basically male or female. A male who chooses to wear female clothing is clearly rejecting reality. We know, however, that many transsexuals have undergone a hormonal development such that they exhibit behavior discordant with their anatomy and socialization. It may be reasonable to see such people not as rejecting reality, but as accepting a reality that—with reference to feeling, thought, and behavior—runs deeper even than the reality of anatomy and socialization.

STEVEN GOLDBERG
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Although Samuel McCracken's article on homosexuality is the best that has been written in recent years, his elaborate effort to keep his balance in an atmosphere of fanaticism leads him to fall over backward on several points.

Most of the psychological speculations about homosexuality are futile. As the great number of conflicting theories makes clear, homosexuality is not a specific mental illness. It emerges among weak,

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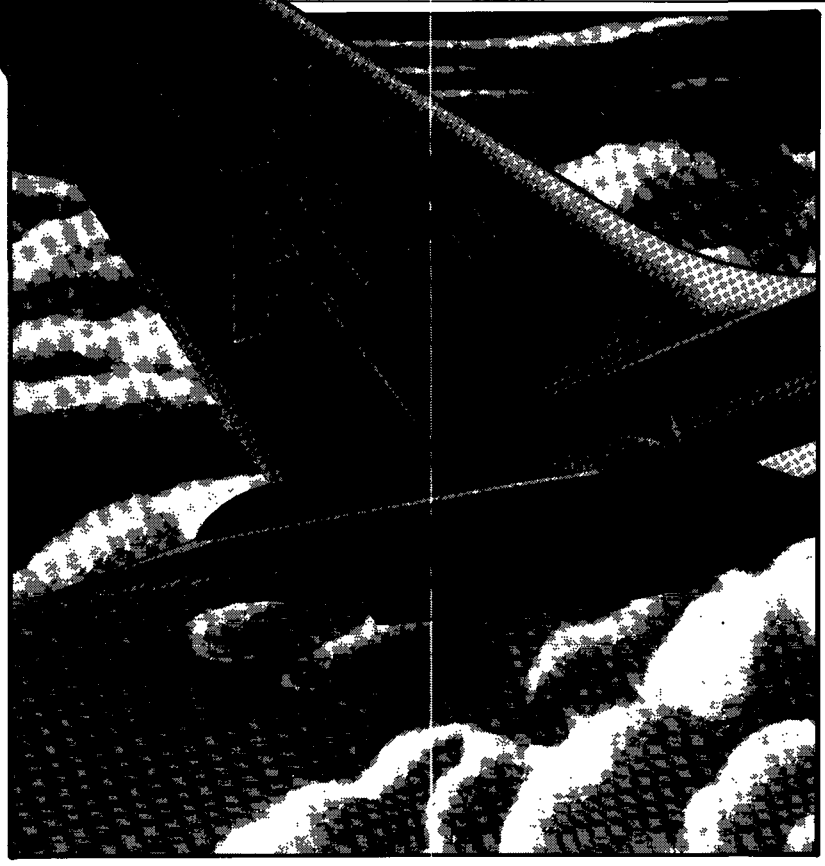

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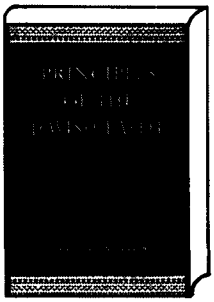

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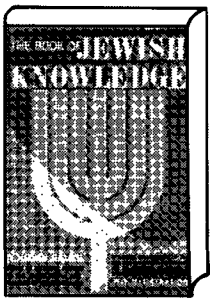

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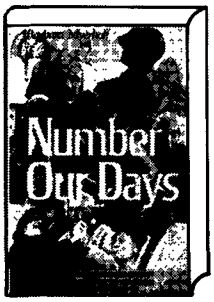

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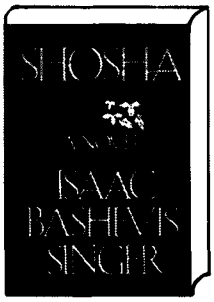

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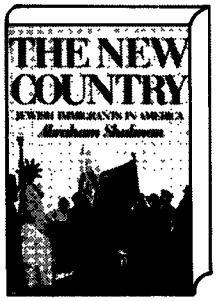

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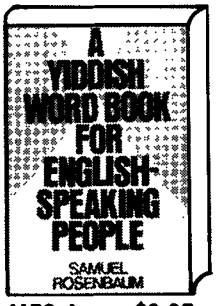

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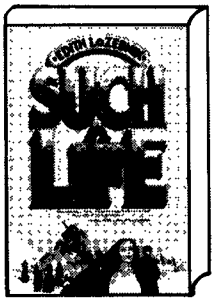

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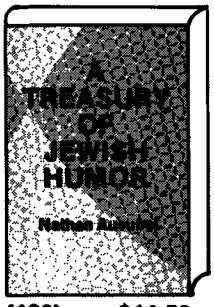

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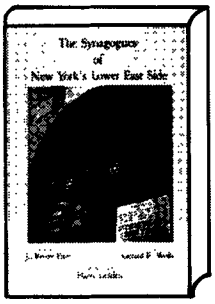

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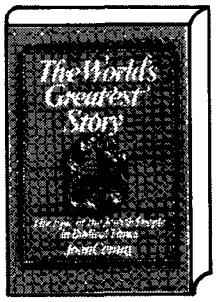

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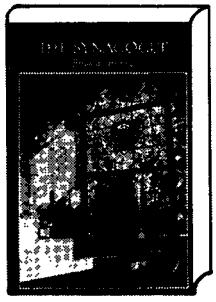

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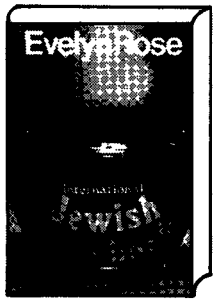

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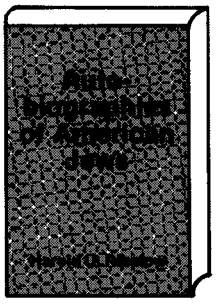

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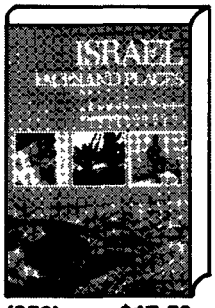

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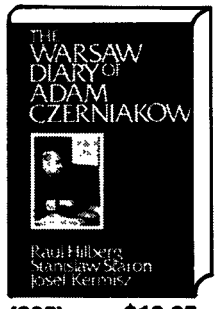

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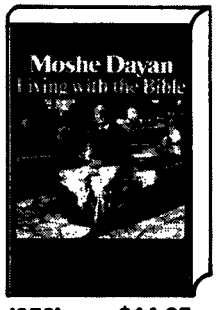

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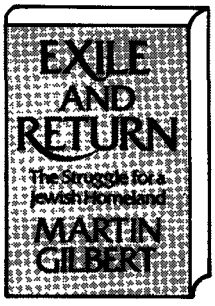

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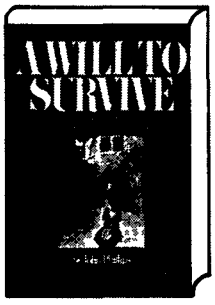

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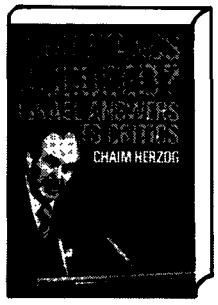

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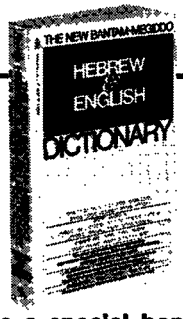

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predatory, or neurotic men in all societies where, for whatever reason—artificial in prisons; religious in the Arab world; economic in many countries—many men are deprived of women and are allowed to create a culture of inversion.

C. A. Tripp's claims for the universality of homosexuality are false. A close analysis of George Murdock's classic catalogue of ethnographies shows that homosexuality is notably present only in polygynous tribes—those in which the dominant men of all ages can have a group or a series of young wives—and that its prevalence varies greatly even in these cultures.

The polygyny of current American society usually takes the form of serial monogamy and is enhanced by sexual and women's "liberation." In general, men have to feel dominant with women to be potent. Any culture that, by whatever means, deprives men of that feeling of dominance will effectively deny them the possibility of marriage and attract them to easy and impersonal perversions.

The key point is that men are not born homosexual or predestined by childhood experience to become homosexuals. Homosexuality is a choice, not a fate. The likelihood of the choice is governed by the beliefs and attitudes of the society and the effective availability of women of childbearing age. The worst result of current pro-homosexual propaganda is that millions of boys grow up imagining that every passing feeling toward men may signify some profound and enduring distortion of sexual identity. If they are seduced during their teens, they may feel their fears have been confirmed. A boy who might otherwise have grown up to live a full life, with family and children, is induced to commit a kind of sexual suicide.

It is thus an indication of the prevailing lunacy that so skeptical and intelligent an observer as Samuel McCracken can accept the notion that the seduction of a teenage boy by his teacher is comparable to the seduction of a teenage girl. Though reprehensible, the seduction of the girl is a fully natural act. The seduction of the boy can inflict gross and permanent damage, particularly in a society that condones homosexuality and accepts the myth of its universality and early childhood fixation.

GEORGE GILDER
Tyringham, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I hesitate to take issue with Samuel McCracken's brilliant analysis of homosexuality, but I would nevertheless like to express my disappointment with one aspect of his article: the section dealing with the campaign to legalize homosexual teachers in primary and secondary schools. . . . Mr. McCracken's conclusions about the classroom are cautious and guarded in tone, and, all in all, less than decisive. Unfortunately, a parent cannot afford the luxury of such "on-the-one-hand" and "on-the-other-hand" musings while an issue is being decided which will have serious consequences for his children. . . .

I respectfully suggest that in his effort to present both sides of this issue fairly, Mr. McCracken has exhibited less than his usual forthrightness.

JOEL WIDOM
Little Neck, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, "Are Homosexuals Gay?," Samuel McCracken sets out to expose the myth of the happy, well-adjusted homosexual and, in doing so, seems to suggest that, contrary to prevailing "enlightened" opinion, homosexuals, as a group, have problems which cannot be solely attributable to the prejudice of others. While some of his individual points are well taken, he never questions why these points need to be made at all. . . . While expressing concern that political ideology prevents a scientific analysis of homosexuality, he blithely ignores the political implications of his own analysis. . . .

[But] whether Mr. McCracken likes it or not, homosexuality has become a political issue. As such, advocacy colors objectivity and ideology determines the focus of analysis and the nature of the conclusions drawn. This is as true of Mr. McCracken's analysis and conclusions as it is of the books he criticizes. For example, he states that "homosexuals are not in reality the object of widespread denial of rights" . . . [and] he goes on to suggest that homosexuals are in some way privileged in that they have an option that is "clearly not open to members of racial minorities or women"—the option of "being in the closet," he does not, however, consider the possibility that the "closet" is the prime reason that denial of rights is not as widespread as it might be and that homosexuality only becomes a political issue when individuals step out of that closet and begin organizing politically. . . .

Clearly, it is the "public" homosexual who has triggered the current debate on homosexuality, particularly the homosexual who does not conform to the prevalent stereotypes and prejudices. . . .

In discussing the controversy surrounding homosexual teachers, he states that "the traditional disapproval [of homosexuality] is fading away and no longer operates as a deterrent" against trying it out in early adolescence. Here he makes most explicit both the traditional social mechanism used to "prevent" homosexuality and his own support of this tradition. He states that adolescence "is an age, *if one is to make a satisfactory* adjustment [to adult life], when the temptation to homosexual behavior is perhaps best avoided altogether" (emphasis added). In this one passage, he implies that heterosexual and homosexual behavior are mutually exclusive, that "adult life" is, by definition, exclusively heterosexual, and that the only "satisfactory" adjustment can be an exclusively heterosexual one. Thus he perpetuates the myth of the unhappy homosexual who, by allowing himself to sample an unnatural, and therefore taboo, experience (rather than taboo, and therefore unnatural), has trapped himself in a wretched condition of his own making. If, however, one speaks from within the myth of the happy homosexual, a "satisfactory adjustment" would be altogether different.

The question which Mr. McCracken poses in his title is clearly not the key issue. *Of course* "gay" is "the very last term to describe "self-destructive" and "wretched" people, homosexual or otherwise. But *why* are many homosexuals self-destructive and wretched in the first place—and not all homosexuals are; those who use the label "gay" probably tend on the whole to be better adjusted and "happier" than those who do not—and *why* has the word "gay" been appropriated (rightly or wrongly) by militant homosexuals and political activists? The reason is that an age-old taboo which fosters and/or exacerbates self-hate in those against whom it is directed is now being severely challenged. A political fight is in progress. In political fights, "truth" is distorted and people who feel they are fighting for their "right to be"

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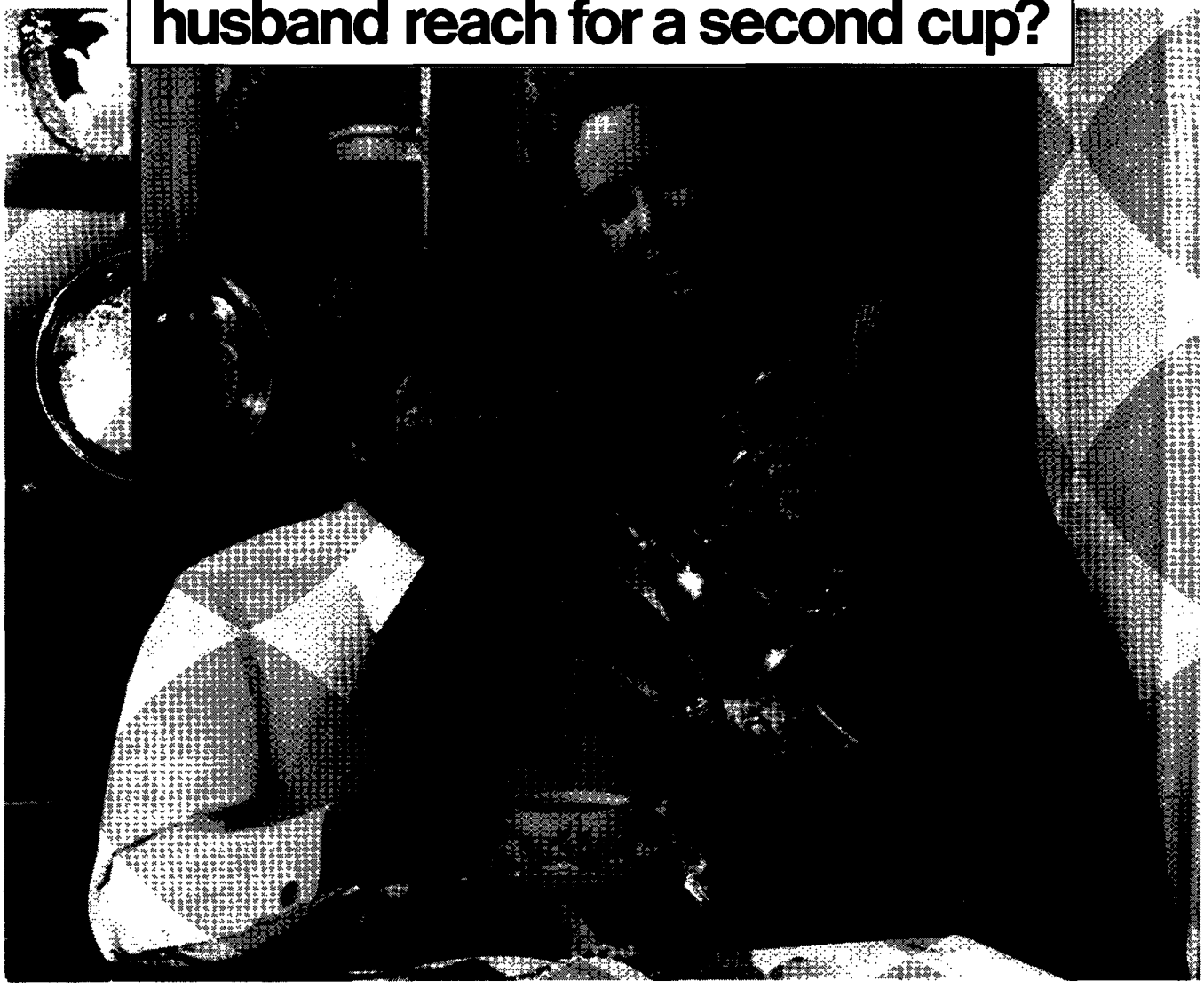

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The Cat and the Kid by Anatoly Kaplan

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—in public or otherwise—will try to influence prevailing negative opinions and hostile attitudes by countering negative with positive and using equal and opposite distortions. This is propaganda. It may be deplorable, but when put in the proper context, it is certainly no mystery. . . .

When Mr. McCracken states that "the force behind the 'gay-rights' movement springs less from a desire to *prevent* potential discrimination and more from a *hope* that, declared a protected status, homosexuality will gain widespread legitimacy" (emphasis added), he is probably right and the same could be stated for the anti-gay-rights movement as well, if one changed "prevent" to "promote" and "hope" to "fear." The central question *is* legitimacy and, despite Mr. McCracken's criticism that the rights issue is being misused, the strategy *can* work. And so can the strategy of constructing an equal and opposite myth to counter the prevailing one. This is what the fight is all about. . . .

It is becoming more and more untenable to study the "nature" of man divorced from the social and political climate in which he lives, acts, and studies his own nature. To state that "we must face things as they are" is to imply that there is absolute truth. Surely the socialization and politicization of science which has occurred over the past century, coupled with the realization *within* science that "scientific objectivity" is at best a useful myth, makes such an injunction somewhat naive, if not dishonest.

RONALD D. CRELINSTEN
Montreal, Quebec

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Samuel McCracken's article repays careful reading: purportedly respectable, even judicious, it is in fact precisely the opposite, full of slyly disingenuous rhetoric, downright misinformation, and grotesque examples designed to excite fear or disgust in his readers and propel them to Mr. McCracken's conclusion that homosexuals are not "gay" at all, but sick, self-destructive, and a menace to society.

Homosexuals have, according to Mr. McCracken, avoided "an adjustment to adult life," renounced responsibility "for the continuance of the human race," rejected reality in ways ranging from the merely pitiable to the repulsive and pathological. They are, moreover, "as sexually active as rabbits." These facile generalizations are of course the ancient clichés of invincible prejudice that willfully ignores the diversity of the human condition, even among homosexuals. Mr. McCracken is not at all sure whether the condition of homosexuality is voluntary or involuntary; even if it is considered involuntary, he states that "its practice is clearly not." There we have his final solution for homosexuals: they should cease all sexual activity and subside into invisibility, or face the righteous wrath of the surrounding society. This breathtaking prescription places Mr. McCracken firmly in the camp of Anita Bryant, or, for that matter, the ideologues of the Third Reich. Jews in particular should find Mr. McCracken's argument depressingly familiar: it is the classic advice to disappear given to minorities that make themselves tiresome by persisting in visible survival. With unconscious irony, Mr. McCracken calls his conclusions "facing things as they are."

Starting from a consideration of the recent study, *Homosexualities*, in which he makes some obvious but nonetheless useful methodological criticisms, Mr. McCracken discusses a number of works, including *The Joy of Gay Sex*, that in his view accurately reflect "current homosexual advocacy" and its "refusal to draw the line"—as if limits in sexual and social conduct were clearly visible and universally observed among heterosexuals in contemporary society. Selecting egregious examples of homosexual sado-masochism, drug abuse, and sex in public places, Mr. McCracken adroitly conflates homosexual fantasies with the horrors of the Manson and Reverend Jim Jones killings—and then, in a device that becomes quite familiar in the course of his article, adds a sly disclaimer that "sado-masochism is, of course, not made more healthy by being practiced by heterosexuals"—as if sado-masochism were a homosexual invention. Mr. McCracken wonders rhetorically where "the line" can be redrawn once it has been erased between homosexuality and heterosexuality, a primitive notion that implies hermetic distinctions instead of the continuum that in fact exists in all human sexuality. He then tells us "lines" have indeed been drawn, in the novel *Faggots*, an ugly fantasy by a New York homosexual that is as accurate a portrayal of homosexual life as *Portnoy's Complaint* was of the Jewish family.

In discussing the gay-rights movement, Mr. McCracken first says that homosexuals, unlike blacks and women, always have the option of "being in the closet," i.e., going underground and avoiding all sexual life—never mind the human cost involved—so that the issue of their rights need not in fact be confronted. He then says homosexuals have never been denied the right to vote, as if that had ever been claimed; nor access to public accommodations, this last illustrated by a grotesque hypothetical case of a transvestite being denied admission to a restaurant. Mr. McCracken satisfies himself that there is no "pervasive" discrimination against homosexuals in employment by observing that some magazines catering to homosexuals contain solicitations for advertisers claiming that their readers enjoy higher-than-average incomes. Surely the Assistant to the President of Boston University can improve on that logical flight; he has simply ignored the entire issue. Others may wonder why, for example, WNET/Channel 13 recently devoted a three-hour program to this precise subject.

It is when dealing with schoolteachers that Mr. McCracken descends to arguments that again should be very familiar to Jews: conceding that "one knows many homosexuals who are clearly decent and law-abiding" and unlikely to molest children, he again asks rhetorically why the fear of homosexual child molestation, which he himself equates with the fear that Jews poison wells, should be so durable. His answer, craftily merging two separate issues: "The male homosexual culture has in it tendencies which suggest, rightly or wrongly, that homosexuals are more likely than heterosexuals to engage in statutory rape, *if not child molestation*" (emphasis added). Ignoring the amply-documented fact that over 90 per cent of child molestation cases concern heterosexuals, often members of the victims' families, Mr. McCracken goes on to say that "the existence of homosexual men who not only traffic in child prostitution but defend the practice as desirable certainly must feed the widespread belief that homosexuals, teachers included, are likely to molest children." He tacks on the customary disingenuous disclaimer:

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"and the belief is fed whether or not it is true, as I believe it is not." This is akin to asserting that although some believe Jews use Christian blood in baking matzah, which one does not of course believe, yet there remains the awkward fact that matzah is baked and consumed by Jews every Passover.

When discussing homosexuality *per se*, Mr. McCracken often displays a sullen resentment that suggests he believes homosexuals are getting away with it. With what? "The intricate, complicated, and challenging process of adjusting one's life to someone so different from oneself as to be in a different sex entirely." What a sad, bleak vision of heterosexual relations, of human relations altogether, Mr. McCracken reveals here. Maintaining that homosexuals have it easier than the rest—"it is easier to live in fantasy than in reality"—he asserts homosexuality is "often, although not universally" linked to "inversion," as he defines it, and then goes on deliberately to merge homosexuality with "inversion," which gives him an opportunity to trot out hoary stereotypes about masculine-feminine role-playing that betray fears and ignorance of a particularly crude variety. Mr. McCracken's confusion overwhelms him on the subject of homosexuality and artistic creativity, although this discussion gives him a chance to deliver a cheap shot feigning incomprehension at how homosexuals, with all their rabbit-like sexual activity, can find the energy for creative endeavor.

Mr. McCracken complains in conclusion that there is insufficient analysis altogether of homosexuality, which is in his view becoming "a sacred cow." He then cites as evidence for his conclusion that homosexuals are wretched and sick three "analytical" memoirists, who would no doubt have been surprised to hear themselves so described—J. R. Ackerley, Christopher Isherwood, and Quentin Crisp—all Englishmen born before 1920, and in fact one of them dead. The entire subject of homosexuality does indeed deserve serious investigation and responsible public discussion. Mr. McCracken, however, is one of those terrible simplifiers who deliberately ignores the vast range of possibility in both heterosexuality and homosexuality; his essentially grim and punishing view of sexuality in general leaves

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no room for compassion, let alone comprehension of human variability. His article is, moreover, neither serious nor responsible: its shoddiness and pandering to prejudice are unworthy of the subject itself and a disgrace to a magazine among whose stated aims is fighting bigotry and protecting human rights.

A. J. SHERMAN

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Samuel McCracken's article on homosexuality demands a response. While he is not blatantly anti-gay or obviously bigoted against a continuingly misunderstood minority, that the editors and readers should accept his entirely erroneous and uninformed grasp of the topic without refutation is horrifying.

In the first part of the article, the author delves at length into the high suicide rates for homosexuals as reported in Bell and Weinberg's *Homosexualities*. He claims that the statistics are misleading and/or distorted and Bell and Weinberg's own description of their statistics is biased. But immediately after bringing up the topic of suicide, the author drops the ball like a hot potato. He has supposedly undermined the book's statistical sampling and interpretative techniques, but does not follow through to ask *why* suicide rates for homosexuals just might actually be higher than for heterosexuals. He drops the subject with myopic, but good, reason: failure to follow the thoughts to their logical and obvious conclusion. He has been on the verge of revealing plainly that overall suicide rates for blacks are higher than for whites. Can it be that the all-too-obvious conclusion is, thus, too onerous and odious for the author? The comparison should be clear. Need I point it out here? Groups of people, any groups, who are oppressed by the attitudes and actions of a society are bound to have higher suicide rates than groups not so oppressed or than society as a whole. It is as simple as that, yet heterosexuals persistently refuse to admit it or see it because they cannot admit that homosexuals just might be the victims of society, like blacks or any other minority group. . . .

Mr. McCracken's resonantly superficial description and extreme misunderstanding of gay "sado-masochism," together with his upright, uptight, resolute (and oh-so-healthy) disapproval of same, points out how little he really understands about homosexuality, its so-called sado-masochism, or the role of fantasy in sexuality. Despite what one would hope to be wide reading on the subjects, Mr. McCracken simply hardens his own preconceived, unvalidated belief system, even going so far as to compare gay sexual fantasies with events such as those in Guyana and with the Manson murders. And where does the missionary position fall in his spectrum of representative symbolic horrors of current events, to say nothing of rape and murder in the sordid underbelly of the straight world?

The author fails to find self-analysis or critical vision among homosexuals in regard to drug use and public sex in "tearooms." The analysis is simple: Western Judeo-Christian societies for more than 2,500 years have severely punished and ostracized homosexuals and any homosexual activity. Does it seem odd that such totality of oppression by sanctioned governmental means and by unbelievably inhuman acts of cruelty against homosexuals among the populace should produce odd behavior and unusual methods of escape (i.e., high suicide rates and heavy drug use) or, alternatively, a safe, enjoyable, covert method of sexual satisfaction (one which may or may not meet your approval)?

Why do authors critical of homosexuals fail to see such connections? Because if they did, it would cause the whole structure of their belief system to collapse under its own weight. This could cause them some anguish of relearning.

The author, in the third section, is so far behind in his reading of current psychological research on theories of homosexual origins that he actually considers the question of "involuntary or voluntary" homosexuality "vexed." Research now clearly shows a growing consensus indicating that sexual preference is basically set by about age five. . . . Of course, the author ignores such evidence, charging directly ahead in typically negative fashion, and stating that "anyway" the actual *practice* of homosexuality is, of course, voluntary. The not-very-well-hidden implication here is that if gays would simply *control* themselves and remain celibate or become eunuchs then they might get better (closely related to the outrageous "germ theory" of homosexuality—see Anita Bryant). And if they got better (that is, became heterosexual or disappeared) then everything would be hunky-dory in Mr. McCracken's vision of society.

The author's assertion of an alleged lack of discrimination against homosexuals further reveals his ignorance of what it means to be a homosexual in America today. Discrimination against homosexuals (whether or not they choose to be obvious by fashion or demeanor) has become quite professional and conspiratorially subtle and pervasive throughout many sectors of our society. Corporations, management, and, yes, academia are not as blind or benign as Mr. McCracken.

Nevertheless, he trundles forward the homemade facts at his disposal. He declares (oh, hoary truism) that homosexuality is (gasp!) "unnatural." Now just exactly what this means in this day and age is beyond me. I, too, can marshal arguments to show that a large number of apparently innate human practices are "unnatural." But, no, the author cannot accept that "whatever is, is natural." He has his very own belief system about human bodies, their functions, orifices, lubricants, procreation (yes, he uses that word too), and even the fact that homosexuals are usually childless. Each person is entitled, of course, to his/her own belief system in life and I think mine is equal to that of Mr. McCracken.

He, of course, blithely and incorrigibly, carries his point even further: homosexuals are "irresponsible" because they do *not* add to the earth's miserable overpopulation problem and because they choose how to spend their own money themselves and choose how to have a good time themselves rather than take instruction from Mr. McCracken's rigid, straight, bloated, fading academic elitism. And, do I dare bring up the point that the straight author himself just might be feeling that he's missing something, just might feel incomplete himself in his own experience, the realms of human experience, that he just might be omitting something from his own self? What do we find when we scratch the surfaces of these charges of irresponsibility, incompleteness, and lives of fantasy? Why, we find an extremely repressed and militantly overdefended ego, and an utterly closed mind and body. We also find a very

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curious, envious, and jealous Incomplete Person there too!

One would not object to Mr. McCracken's asking serious and useful questions in the last part of his article, but when he starts mixing inversion, homosexuality, transvestism, creativity, Freud, and lesbians on the same page, confusing all of those subjects, one realizes that a shotgun has got nothing on the author's grasp of his topic (s).

Again and again the author says we must face things as they are. It is clear from Mr. McCracken's own article that he would like to do just that in some areas, while in others he chooses to remain smothered by myth, bunk, hokum, hearsay, and personal prejudice.

NED TUCK
San Francisco, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Samuel McCracken's article puts the late Alfred Rosenberg to shame. . . .

He continually points to the higher suicide rate of homosexuals, but nowhere does he address himself to what part Western "civilization" played in this phenomenon. Incidentally, the same Western "culture" also contributed to the increased number of suicides among Jews in pre-war Germany.

Mr. McCracken goes on to cry, like an erudite Anita Bryant: " . . . many male homosexuals add gross effeminacy of manner and a few add cross-dressing. . . . Men who, not being Napoleon or Teddy Roosevelt, dress and act like these historic gentlemen, are a byword not merely for maladjustment but for madness." Unfortunately, Mr. McCracken does not follow up with an admission that 98 per cent of homosexuals are indistinguishable in appearance from heterosexuals.

Mr. McCracken appears to gag on C. A. Tripp's allusion to the great number of artists who are or were homosexuals. He might have also mentioned the plethora of fine writers who fall within this category.

It is tragic that more people in our society do not recognize the possibility that people like Mr. McCracken might just be reflecting a personal problem in propounding the kind of half-truths he has successfully foisted on the editorial staff. Such articles are more appropriate to *Der Stuermer*.

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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

At one point in his article Samuel McCracken states: "A rational view of homosexuality has always been difficult to hold and to propagate." Mr. McCracken's vicious piece does not make it any easier.

It is difficult to respond to Mr. McCracken's diatribe. . . . There are so many points which should be addressed and yet a letter to the editor allows for just so much space. One is tempted to attack his perverse use of selected pornography to incite distaste and hatred under the guise of what purports to be a serious discussion. One is also tempted to detail with great dudgeon the cheap tricks, worthy of a precocious but not too ethical high-school debater, with which Mr. McCracken develops most of his arguments, such as his totally gratuitous inclusion of transvestism in each of the discussions, and his disclaimers followed by the very thought he was disclaiming. . . .

All of the above, though important, should be fairly obvious to any intelligent reader who is not searching to have his prejudices confirmed. However, there are two points in particular that need to be examined in more detail . . . : discrimination against the homosexual and the renunciation of responsibility of the homosexual.

One of the curious aspects of the article is that while Mr. McCracken admits, albeit tentatively and with little detail, the persecution of the gay in terms of harassment, entrapment, and brutality, he claims that discrimination does not exist. His recognition of the "closet" as an option clearly indicates that he recognizes there is such discrimination, else why would there be a need for such an option?

Several years ago there was a study in Canada (S.L. Wax, 1948) which demonstrated that if someone with a "Jewish" name like "Greenberg" were to apply to a hotel for a reservation, he would be far less likely to get one than someone named "Lockwood." According to Mr. McCracken's reasoning, the Greenbergs of this world are not discriminated against the way that women and blacks are, because they do have the option of hiding their Jewishness, perhaps by changing their names.

Discrimination against gay persons does exist. It ranges from legal sanctions, including imprisonment, discharge from the armed forces, etc., to expulsion from one's family or church. If Mr. McCracken is interested in learning something about the oppression of the gay, I would suggest that he consult sources other than *The Joy of Gay Sex*.

Mr. McCracken states: "The fact is that homosexuality generally entails a renunciation of responsibility for the continuance of the human race and of a voice in the dialogue of the generations." Like most of his facts, it isn't, but is, rather, a poorly supported opinion. He begins with the simplistic assumption that the continuation of the human race depends solely upon the physical production of children. It also depends upon the maintenance of a society that can support, feed, train, and generally care for those children. I wonder, when was the last time Mr. McCracken prescribed medicine for his children, made the clothing they wear to school, grew the food they eat, taught them in the classroom, etc.? All those who have done those things for Mr. McCracken's children have taken responsibility for the "continuance of the human race," and a large number of them are probably gay. . . .

A. DAMIEN MARTIN
New York University
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In the wake of Harvey Milk's assassination, it was both shocking and dismaying to read in COMMENTARY a homophobic diatribe by an intellectual Anita Bryant. Samuel McCracken's article purports to deny that homosexuals are in fact "gay." . . . Mr. McCracken points out that "they" are promiscuous, have suicidal tendencies, engage in "bizarre" sex and take "poppers"—amyl nitrite. Moreover, he implies that even if they are gay, they are happy because they are irresponsible. One wonders if having a heritage of millennia of persecuion at the hands of zealous heterosexist bigots under the guise of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, capitalist democracy, Communism, and one's own family itself might account for the basis of some of these pathologies. . . . Of course, minorities will display symptoms of alienation and gays, who are the most oppressed, might be expected to have their share. . . .

That a Jewish magazine chose to publish such an insidious diatribe might seem a bit surprising, considering we gays were also slaughtered in gas chambers by the Nazi maniacs. Remember the pink triangles! . . . We were also butchered by the Inquisition, like the "closet" Jews and Moors (Marranos and Moriscos) in Spain. Remember them when you want to talk about the "beauty" of staying in the closet. Moreover, some gay writers estimate that at least hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of gays may have been burned at the stakes as witches and heretics—the very word "faggot" conveys the holocaust against gays. . . .

As for Mr. McCracken's little discourse on why gays do not merit this nomenclature, . . . gay people are sick of this patronizing, heterosexist, colonialist mentality which tells us what we should call ourselves.

TONI BORDONI
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I am disturbed by the snide rhetorical tenor of Samuel McCracken's article, which remains quite apparent despite the author's unsuccessful effort to appear unbiased. Mr. McCracken plays the role of the Grand Inquisitor: ostensibly caring deeply for the soul of his victim, while ever-so-piously setting match to the faggot (pun intended) which will carry the hapless victim to oblivion.

Mr. McCracken's approach, initially to call into disrepute the most recent sociological study on the subject of homosexuality, establishes an odd, and presumably unintended, juxtaposition of *Homosexualities* (which he faults because of errors in scope, method, and interpretation) with other sources more to his liking, which have the characteristics of extreme tendentiousness. Refering to *Homosexualities*, he writes: "If the study had shown more interest in tabulating the proportions of transvestites and sado-masochists, not to mention more lurid specializations, it would have been perhaps harder to maintain the comfortable view of homosexuality. . . ." Should we wish to know more about the putative place of such "lurid specializations" in homosexual society, the author obliges by citing opinions from popular literature, all, of course, as an invitation to open and enlightened discussion. . . .

I remain sharply suspicious of those who merely recite the most closely held homophobic myths be-

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cause "we must face things as they are." A mere recitation without competent analysis does not *begin* to delineate "things as they are." . . . This endless piffle on the subject only serves to detract from the truly important question: Who, in the existential sense, is the homosexual to be? How is the homosexual experience to be made a fulfilling, goal-directed one? Mr. McCracken dismisses Larry Kramer's *Faggots* in a short paragraph as having merit, but as "of course already beginning to be denounced by the activists." Why "of course"? Kramer and, similarly, Andrew Holleran in *Dancer from the Dance* ask important existential questions in their novels, which have considerably raised the level of discussion among homosexuals. Mr. McCracken shows an unexplainable propensity to overlook this fact, in favor of vivid sensationalism. . . .

To "face things as they are," as Mr. McCracken would have it, is the first inducement to despair, if not allied with the vision to see things as they ought to be.

JOHN G. WILKINSON
Portland, Oregon

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I began to suspect trouble on the first page of Samuel McCracken's article. Blacks are "black," even though most of them are brown; gay people are "homosexuals" because the name we prefer is a euphemism. And then, of course, it gets much worse. Many of us are depressed, as I was by reading Mr. McCracken's article, which clearly indicates that we are mentally ill. Some of us, perhaps damaged by the sort of repression Mr. McCracken advocates, pretend we are masters or slaves during sex; the sort of thing which, God knows, could never happen to heterosexuals. . . .

And so it goes, on and on. . . . There is a market for this sort of article, and I should think that the *Anita Bryant Newsletter* or possibly the *Voelkischer Beobachter* would have been pleased to get it. But why COMMENTARY?

DOUGLASS ROBY
Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In his article, Samuel McCracken states: "The fact is that homosexuality generally entails a renunciation of responsibility for the continuance of the human race and of a voice in the dialogue of the generations." . . . But there is a great deal more to "the continuance of the human race" than merely making children. . . . Would that all the human race had to do was continue. Unfortunately, this is not so. We could have continued very well . . . as cave men, gnawing on raw food and hoping that some day one of us would invent the wheel or paint something on those weary walls at Lascaux. When one is talking about humanity, continuance entails development, and development of civilization has absolutely nothing to do with sexual preference. Though I detest sexual speculation regarding our ancestors, certainly Socrates spoke and still speaks to "the generations." And this applies equally to Leonardo da Vinci and all other creators in any discipline whom the gay activists now name-drop as a form of defense and justification. Surely Mr. McCracken would admit and allow that homosexuals have made, and make, significant contributions—those which move us yet further from the caves.

Regarding the arts specifically, I would speculate that homosexuals have contributed precisely because they do not have—they are by their nature freed from—the awesome and weighty responsibilities of bringing up children. They can put their minds (after all, Mr. McCracken, human beings are both minds and bodies) to other things.

Furthermore, and again regarding reproduction, one need only glance at the low standards of today's youth and the utter pragmatism of both young and old to realize that reproduction is not that great a banner to wave. . . .

ELAN GARONZIK
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

We constantly hear talk about homosexual contributions to the arts, but if the question were to be asked, Have not heterosexuals made as significant a contribution, wouldn't the answer be a decisive yes?

STEVE KNISS
Springfield, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Samuel McCracken's article is the most thinly-disguised harangue against gays that I have read in a long time. Under the façade of fairness, he manages to distort and reverse almost everything that gay activists stand for.

His formula is simple: pick a book (or movie) and lift a quotation that will suit his point—no matter how out-of-context it is. For instance, out of the twenty-six moving interviews with homosexuals in the documentary film, *Word Is Out*, why does Mr. McCracken pick the few unpleasant passages where gay men seem selfish and intolerant of others?

His article takes on a feverish pitch of self-righteousness as he travels from one area of gay life to another—although he begins each section rather calmly. For example, in the child-molestation section Mr. McCracken agrees that gays are no more likely to molest little children than are heterosexuals, but then he goes off on an emotional tangent about a pederasty ring in Boston.

It is clear that Samuel McCracken's mind about gay liberation was made up well before he undertook the essay purporting to reveal insights about our lives and struggles. . . .

TIMOTHY CWIEK
Philadelphia Gay Media Association
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

With the publication of Samuel McCracken's "Are Homosexuals Gay?," COMMENTARY sinks to a new low in the mire of conservative reaction and intolerance. Mr. McCracken, in his denigration of the gay-rights movement, displays the fullest insensitivity to overwhelming forces of institutional, psychological, and ideological oppression which confront minorities in this country—be they blacks in white America, Jews in Christian America, or gays in straight America. . . .

To cite claims of higher-than-average gay incomes or the alleged scarcity of "de-facto" edicts against gays in employment by no means demonstrates, as Mr. McCracken suggests, an absence of job or any other kind of discrimination. The elimination of laws persecuting blacks has certainly not ended racial bias. But more importantly, what Mr. McCracken's analysis fails to account for is that the real oppression being protested against emanates from the sexual ethos of the dominant culture which preaches that homosexuals are necessarily sick, abnormal, and living less than complete lives. Mr. McCracken fails to see this because he clearly subscribes to each of these

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views himself. He expresses incredulity at the tendency of certain gays toward a psycho-sexual identification with the slave or prisoner because he cannot see that the self-deprecation manifest in such behavior is a logical consequence of the oppressive self-image which straight America operates in innumerable ways to impose upon gays.

Mr. McCracken seems to applaud Larry Kramer's recent "remarkable" novel which characterizes gay life as shallow, self-indulgent, and frivolous, and he even ridicules gay-rights leaders for speaking out against it. He fails to see what the gay press has come to acknowledge: this type of literature, especially when written from "the inside," is just as self-destructive to the gay psyche as individual acts of sado-masochism. Mr. McCracken's inability to see the real problems of gays in this country is truly exasperating, and his clinical discourse cannot screen either his lack of insight or his own blatant prejudices. He . . . is trapped in the web of his own homophobia. . . . If it were not so tragic and repellent, one could almost laugh at his "some-of-my-best-friends-are-gay" conclusion.

Mr. McCracken's lack of understanding of the oppression experienced by gays cripples his perception of the gay-rights movement. . . . Undoubtedly, gay relationships suffer from the same neuroses and exhibit the same variety of forms that characterize the heterosexual world. But if the gay-community spokespersons sometimes seem unwilling to admit to any problems, it is not because they are unrecognized; almost every gay person is all too aware of them—and, lest he forget, the Samuel McCrackens and Larry Kramers will always remind him. Rather, this alleged whitewashing occurs to counteract the pervasive stereotypes, to begin the desperately overdue process of constructing a positive and affirmative gay movement and identification which can take the place of the self-hatred which has lasted too long. The rhetoric may seem to condone all behavior with a philosophy of "anything goes," but that is not its main thrust. Rather, it seeks to accomplish the much more significant goal of allowing gay people to feel good about themselves, to feel healthy, to feel normal, to feel whole and complete. This development must occur before one can hope to see the elimination of the patterns which so upset Mr. McCracken. That he should have so little insight into and sympathy with these efforts in his utterly distorted portrayals of the movie, *Word Is Out*, or the book, *The Joy of Gay Sex*, represents the worst kind of outwardly projected personal distress and ruling-class thinking. . . .

DAVID A. KARNES
Harvard College
Cambridge, Massachusetts

SAMUEL MCCRACKEN writes:

First, I would like to thank Joseph Adelson, Edward M. Levine, Steven Goldberg, and George Gilder for their generous comments.

MR. GOLDBERG has persuaded me. To the extent that some transsexuals are the victims of fetal hormone incidents, I agree that they are certainly responding to a more compelling reality by seeking transsexual surgery. Whether they are homosexuals at all would depend not on their desire for surgery, but on what they do after it is accomplished.

I AM glad that Mr. Gilder attributes my alleged backward fall to so laudable a cause as a desire to keep my balance. My own view is that the universality of homosexuality, even if proven, would say nothing about its desirability. All sorts of widely condemned behavior is also widely found. But it is obvious that much of the homosexual behavior cited as evidence for universality is a ritualized and transitory phenomenon that bears little resemblance to the contemporary form in advanced societies.

Mr. Gilder deals helpfully with a point I only adumbrated, that a certain amount of passing homosexual behavior is common among adolescents, and it is unfortunate when this is taken seriously—by the participants no less than by a censorious society.

I regard heterosexual and homosexual seduction of children as comparable only in that each is despicable. Mr. Gilder is certainly right, however, in the distinction he makes, and if my essay can be fairly read as rejecting this distinction, then I have been less clear than I should have been in stating my position.

I IN TURN hesitate to take issue with so generous a critic as Joel Widom. If my statements about homosexual teachers in the classroom are guarded and cautious, it is because the issue is in fact very complex, balancing as it does conflicting rights. And Mr. Widom is perfectly correct in saying that a journalist can afford tentativeness that a parent cannot. My own view as a parent is that homosexual teachers ought to be judged on their own merits like everyone else. I would regard a transvestite teacher who insisted on exploiting his right to appear in the classroom in drag—if legally established—as so lacking in judgment as to raise doubts about his competence, which is precisely the position I would take with regard to a heterosexual transvestite, or indeed any teacher who insisted on turning up for work dressed in a ludicrously inappropriate fashion. I think parents ought to be willing to protest the employment of irresponsible teachers severally and singly, rather than falling back upon the exclusion of a large group, many of whom are responsible. There are not enough good teachers in the world to do without those who are homosexual.

Another issue implicit in Mr. Widom's letter is the problem of role models. Let me be forthright: homosexuals are, *qua* their homosexuality, inappropriate role models. On the other hand, so are those who smoke and so are those who are grossly overweight. We do not propose to ban the latter classes, even though their inappropriate behavior and status may be visible to their students. I think homosexual teachers have no more right to be officially certified as perfect role models than fat teachers and teachers who smoke.

IF by "the myth of the happy, well-adjusted homosexual" Ronald D. Crelinsten means the idea that homosexuals as a group are as happy and well-adjusted as an equivalent population of heterosexuals, then that is precisely the myth I am out to counter. But I do not mean to argue that no homosexuals are happy and well-adjusted.

Mr. Crelinsten's disagreement with me is best expressed in his last paragraph. As old-fashioned as it may be, I really do believe in the existence of absolute truth, e.g., the fact that the orbit of Venus is always inside the orbit of earth or that lead is denser than aluminum. It is a complex and elusive quality, corrosive on those who believe they have an easy grip on it. But it is

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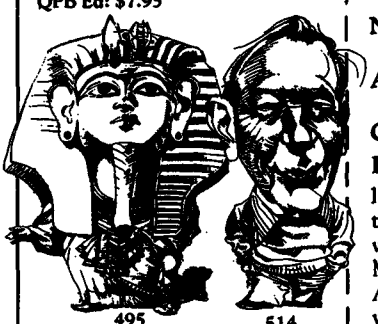

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not so corrosive as the belief that it does not exist, that there is no external world of reality against which perceptions are measured. Those who hold this latter belief in its most extreme form are quickly "liberated" into madness. Naive I may be in this, but not dishonest, for I have expounded my heresy on the topic before in these pages ("The Drugs of Habit and the Drugs of Belief," June 1971).

With this archaic orientation, I find it important to try to establish what is before deciding why it is. As a matter of fact, it seems to me almost too obvious to mention that much of the distortion of reality on which I was reporting is politically inspired. Now, it appears that Mr. Crelinsten would agree with me that politics is the Father of Lies. But once one has made this obvious comment, one is—or I, at least, am—still stuck with the obvious problem of which predicates are lies and which are not.

I do not think that his discussion adds much to our understanding of this sort of question, which I gather does not interest him a great deal.

Mr. Crelinsten is unique among my critics in pursuing a fundamental disagreement with me reasonably and courteously. The remainder of those who argue that I am full of applesauce do it in a very different manner. In reading over the more intemperate of these letters, it occurs to me that had I published a Philippic against motherhood, it would have have occasioned a more moderate reaction. Homosexuality is the last, and has become the greatest, of our sacred cows. No skepticism, no doubt, can be permitted: he who expresses either is no better than a Nazi.

A. J. SHERMAN's letter repays careful reading: purportedly high-minded, even devoted to compassion and human fulfillment, it is in fact precisely the opposite, a shoddy compound of cant, misrepresentation, half-truth, and downright lie, designed to excite fear and disgust in his readers and propel them toward his conclusion that I am not only anti-homosexual but anti-Semitic.

Mr. Sherman appears to believe that he had only to label my views "the ancient clichés of invincible prejudice" in order to refute them. Taking my undebatable assertion that homosexual activity—a condition of choice—is distinguishable from ethnic background, he uses the phrase "final solution" to characterize a view which I do not hold and expressed nowhere in the article. His denigration of me pales beside his trivialization of the Holocaust. But Mr. Sherman is not content with his oblique—I suppose he would call it "sly"—attempt to make me out a Nazi. I am, he says, "firmly in the camp . . . of the ideologues of the Third Reich." To say this is to say that I favor sending homosexuals to concentration camps. Mr. Sherman does not really believe this, for he is content to misrepresent my views by claiming I say that homosexuals "should cease all sexual activity and subside into invisibility." Given the demanding standard set by his Nazi accusation, this is less vicious, but no less false. Since I advocated the legalization of sexual relations among consenting adults and opposed the banning of homosexual teachers from the classroom, Mr. Sherman must know that I do not advocate what he says I do.

It is a crumb of comfort that Mr. Sherman finds my methodological objections to *Homosexualities* "useful." But they are not "obvious," because they have not been made by other reviewers.

I fear I am unregenerate in my belief that in general heterosexual society observes limits more closely than homosexual advocates of the sort represented by *The Joy of Gay Sex* and similar works. Readers wishing to choose between our positions need only consult the works in question, which represent the use of amyl nitrite as very widespread among male homosexuals and sado-masochism as a growing cult. If these views are inaccurate, then Mr. Sherman's quarrel is with the authors of this work, not with me.

Mr. Sherman's disposition of the line between homosexual and heterosexual activity is Pirandellian: right he is if he thinks he is. The problem is more complex than that. To require a satire to be an "accurate portrayal" betrays a lack of literary understanding. Ought we to fault *Gulliver's Travels* because everyone knows that Europeans in the early 18th century were really well over six inches tall?

I never suggested that the issue of the legitimate rights of homosexuals need not be confronted. I did suggest that those rights are ill-served by the present campaign to make homosexuals a protected minority. I am not sure what is "grotesque" about my example of discrimination against transvestites, but I gather Mr. Sherman agrees with me that homosexuals are not discriminated against in public accommodation. I am not surprised that WNET should have devoted a long program to this issue, but it is odd out of three hours to hear no example.

Mr. Sherman's attempt to make me out an anti-Semite begins with a lie: that I "ignore the amply-documented fact that over 90 per cent of child molestation cases concern heterosexuals. . . ." I said in my essay that "the great majority of all child molesters are heterosexual males . . . the evidence is that homosexuals are, at worst, no more disposed to molest children than heterosexuals. . . ." Did Mr. Sherman find my essay inadequately inoffensive as it stood and did he improve it on the assumption that readers have short memories?

His ritual-murder analogy is inexact. Let me make it more exact with specifications: let us suppose that after a group of Jews has been indicted on charges of ritual murder, certain Jewish spokesmen begin issuing statements to the effect that ritual murder isn't so bad, and besides, Christian children *like* having their blood drained to make matzah. If someone suggested that such statements were not helpful, would Mr. Sherman handle him in the same fashion? Mr. Sherman's analogy is not merely defamatory, it begs the question: we all *know* that the ritual-murder charge is false, and, therefore, by analogy, we *know* that homosexuals do not molest children. Since Mr. Sherman admits that 10 per cent of child molestation is by homosexuals, and he does not deny the existence of the statements I cited, nothing is left of this passage except his intellectually and morally bankrupt attempt to associate me with the most virulent types of anti-Semitism.

A homosexual newspaper in Boston is currently publishing a continuing controversy over the propriety of homosexual relations involving minors. Some homosexual contributors to the debate argue against such relationships, and I suppose Mr. Sherman would call them Nazis too.

It should also be noted here that Mr. Sherman appears to differentiate between child molestation and statutory rape, and think rape less serious. This is typical of his moral vision.

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As to my alleged sullen resentment of homosexuals for "getting away with it," Mr. Sherman cannot have it both ways. Logic—but not my text—can sustain either the proposition that I regard homosexuals generally as "sick and self-destructive" or the notion that I envy them. Not both. And apparently he believes that he can dispose of the phenomenon of role-playing by calling it a "hoary stereotype."

Mr. Sherman turns fanciful again in his reference to my "cheap shot feigning incomprehension at how homosexuals, with all their rabbit-like sexual activity, can find the energy for creative endeavor." I neither feigned nor expressed such incomprehension. Rather, I pointed out the plain contradiction between the Freudian theory of sublimation and the cult of homosexual creativity.

With regard to the essayists I cited in conclusion (he does not, by the way, seem to have noticed that I put Isherwood in a different class from Ackerley and Crisp), Mr. Sherman seems to be arguing that that was a long time ago in another country, and besides one of the memoirists is dead. I am less sure than Mr. Sherman that either Ackerley or Crisp would be surprised to be thought analytical.

If Mr. Sherman were not himself a terrible simplifier of the most terrible sort, he could see that far from ignoring the vast range of possibility in both heterosexuality and homosexuality, I explicitly recognized it. But this recognition is a very different thing from refusing to discriminate among the manifestations of this diversity, as he does and would have me do.

Mr. Sherman appears to believe that when I noted that the maintenance of heterosexual relationships is a complicated business I gave evidence of a "grim and punishing view of sexuality in general." This hyperbole is typical of his inability to read the text before him and respond directly to what is said, rather than at second hand to his own hysterical and prejudiced reaction. Finally, on the evidence of his letter, Mr. Sherman has no business invoking compassion or calling others bigots.

Ned Tuck is very generous in saying that I am neither "blatantly anti-gay [n]or obviously bigoted."

I did not discuss the high suicide rates of homosexuals, because there are no hard data on the topic. Rather, I discussed the high rate of suicide attempts reported in *Homosexualities*. But I did not, contrary to his allegation, claim that these statistics are misleading or distorted. I merely noted the plain fact that they are very inaccurately reported in the summary chapter and are at variance with the generally optimistic conclusions of the study. I gather from all these references to myopia, onerousness, odiousness, and so forth, that I am being accused of suppressing evidence in a fashion which, if proven, would deny me the right to be taken seriously.

The only problem with Mr. Tuck's charge is that it is based on falsified statistics. There is no need for Mr. Tuck to take my word for this. Let him look at a standard reference work, *The Statistical Abstract of the United States*. On page 182, he will find a table of suicide statistics by race. Since 1945, the suicide rate for white males has hovered around 25 per 100,000. For white females, it has risen over the same period from 7.2 to 9.3 per 100,000. On Mr. Tuck's theory, white females, although somewhat more oppressed since the rise of women's liberation, are much less oppressed than white males. Over the same period, the suicide rate for non-white males has risen from 8.5 to 16.4. On Mr. Tuck's theory, the effect of thirty-five years of civil-rights activity has been to double the oppression of non-white men, but at least they are only 60 per cent as oppressed as white men. Since 1945, the suicide rate for non-white females has risen from 2.1 to 4.6. That is, on Mr. Tuck's principles, although the position of non-white females has worsened by 119 per cent since 1945, they are still the least oppressed of the four groups.

These facts dispose not only of Mr. Tuck's specific claim about suicide rates among blacks and whites, but also of the house of cards he

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erects on it. High suicide rates are not a symptom of oppression. In national suicide rates, we see the same pattern: Austria, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland have the highest suicide rates in Western Europe, about four times those of Italy and five times those of Spain. Elsewhere in the world, the suicide rate in the Philippines and in Mexico is almost low enough to be accounted for by despondent tourists and successfully disguised homicides.

Although many of my critics say that homosexuals have high suicide rates, the only evidence I have seen for this—and it is inadequate evidence—is that a group of homosexuals from San Francisco report a higher rate of suicide attempts than a heterosexual control group. If homosexuals do have abnormally high suicide rates, they appear to be alone among "oppressed groups" in this regard.

Mr. Tuck may be simply ignorant rather than dishonest, and I hope he will consider how much else of his passionately held "belief system" rests on similar bogus information.

There is no way to answer Mr. Tuck's vague claim that I misunderstand sado-masochism. It would be interesting to know why he calls it "so-called." Have even its enthusiasts misdescribed it, and are its adepts really into the avoidance of pain, humiliation, and feelings of dominance? Mr. Tuck concedes that it is "odd behavior," but it is not clear wherein he believes the oddness lies. He would advance the debate on the topic were he to provide evidence and argumentation rather than relying, as he does, on ill-tempered but unspecific assertion and personal abuse. Charles Manson and Jim Jones, are, Mr. Tuck must realize, precisely examples of the "sordid underbelly" of hetersosexuality, the existence of which I explicitly recognized in my article . Would he have preferred me to have cited homosexual mass murders in Texas and Illinois?

If Mr. Tuck wishes to believe that homosexual relations in "tearooms" are "enjoyable," I have no grounds on which to dispute him. Whether they are "safe" might be disputed by those who are arrested or assaulted there. (*The Joy of Gay Sex* has some interesting practical advice on how to tell whether your newfound partner is about to mug you.) In any event, even conceding Mr. Tuck's overheated claims of oppression by "Judeo-Christian societies," surely it is clear that Jews have been at least as persecuted as homosexuals without developing similar pathologies. Quite the reverse: historically the Jewish rate of alcoholism has been a fraction of that among their Gentile oppressors.

Considering Mr. Tuck's grasp of suicide statistics, he is perhaps not quite the person to tell me that I am behind in my research, but I am aware of his "growing consensus" that sexual preferences are fixed by the age of five or so. But I retain my right to believe that the minority view has not been disposed of and that the issue remains "vexed."

Mr. Tuck's assertions about discrimination remain no more than that. As it happens, I did not deny the existence of discrimination against homosexuals. But I did maintain that it is preposterous to equate it with discrimination against blacks.

Mr. Tuck finds "this day and age" a strange time to invoke the notion of the natural, but there was never a time when the term was a more pervasive shibboleth. To the charge of the unspeakable crime of having uttered the term "procreation," I am able to offer neither denial nor mitigation.

One is hardly surprised to hear homosexual apologists raise the issue of overpopulation, and I suppose that homosexuals in certain overpopulated and underdeveloped nations may feel they are performing a public service. But in the United States, where we will almost certainly shortly face the problems of what the depopulationists quaintly call "negative population growth," this is not the case. Indeed, any person of whatever affectional preference who determines to remain childless and whose economic well-being depends to any extent on the existence of children is to some extent parasitic on those who have children.

Mr. Tuck's paragraph of personal vituperation is obviously deeply felt but a little repetitious. He appears to have a very strong need to believe that homosexuals lead lives to be envied, and to have great difficulty in believing that I do not envy them.

I take it that Mr. Tuck believes that "inversion, homosexuality, tranvestism, creativity, Freud, and lesbians" are somehow unrelated topics; when he speaks of "myth, bunk, hokum, hearsay, and personal prejudice," he speaks as an expert practitioner.

It is not clear to which Nazi leader Raymond Dennis Jarrard is tastefully and moderately comparing me, Alfred Rosenberg or Julius Streicher, publisher of *Der Stuermer*. I suspect he has not actually read any of Rosenberg's work, which is too incomprehensible to be compared to anything. But I appreciate the delicate compliment of being compared with Streicher, the "beast of Franconia."

Mr. Jarrard's novel and incisive suggestion is that the alleged high suicide rate of homosexuals is the fault of Western civilization, which also appears to be responsible for Hitler. If only this country could be free to enjoy the moderation and humanity of those non-Western civilizations that produced Idi Amin and Pol Pot!

Mr. Jarrard seems unaware that Anita Bryant goes about advocating those very laws against the employment of homosexual teachers that I explicitly rejected. I did not "admit" that 98 per cent of homosexuals are indistinguishable in appearance from heterosexuals because the figure is not that high. Even among homosexuals who do not cultivate the fashions of inversion, there is a homosexual style, and Mr. Jarrard is being either naive or disingenuous to deny it.

I did not "gag on Tripp's allusion to the great number of artists who are . . . homosexuals," or mention any such allusions by Tripp: I brought the issue up all by myself and made it clear that homosexuals are prominent in all arts. Perhaps Mr. Jarrard does not regard writing as an art.

I suspect that Mr. Jarrard's tactful suggestion that I write out of "a personal problem" is probably a veiled version of the suggestion often made by homosexuals that they who criticize homosexuality do so because they are themselves homosexuals. This is an astonishing notion, suggesting as it does that only homosexuals have any reason to be skeptical about homosexuality. The notion may reflect in those who make it a measure of subconscious recognition of the facts.

It is not clear why A. Damien Martin, under the guise of defending homosexuality, should claim that

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a more or less random selection of material from a heavily affirmative book on the subject should "incite distaste and hatred." One intention among several I had in citing these passages was to show that some aspects of homosexuality, even as presented by supporters, can be distasteful.

I did not introduce transvestism into each of my discussions, although I am at a loss to understand why he thinks transvestism is "totally gratuitous" to a discussion of homosexuality.

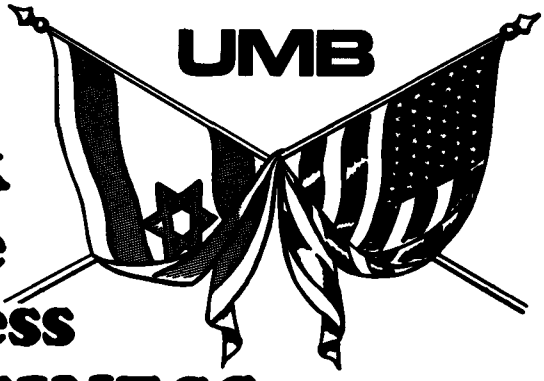
Mr. Martin calls my flat reference to police harassment of homosexuals as "serious and indefensible" a "tentative" admission. I did not, as he paradoxically claims, say that discrimination against homosexuals does not exist. I made the claim that it is much less widespread and pervasive than the discrimination borne by other minorities.

Nor did I claim that homosexuals are not discriminated against because they have the option of concealing their orientation. I noted that the presence of this option, in the context of constitutional law, distinguished them from all the minorities previously protected by civil-rights acts. Terrible simplifiers like Mr. Martin are always uneasy with such distinctions, but that does not make them any less real.

Mr. Martin's own examples of "discrimination" all beg the question. Once one assumes without argument that there is absolutely nothing wrong with homosexuality, then it is a simple matter to claim that all laws and customs which disadvantage it are unjustifiably discriminatory. But this tactic should not pass for argument. I myself believe that many of the disadvantages now imposed on homosexuals are unjustifiable. But these must be analyzed singly and severally. As long, for example, as it is settled Roman Catholic dogma that homosexuality is a sin, one may reasonably expect the church to regard the matter as one for religious discipline.

I do not know what to make of Mr. Martin's suggestion that I consult sources other than *The Joy of Gay Sex*. My essay dealt directly with ten books, which formed only part of my reading. Can Mr. Martin really believe his readers can be snookered into ignoring this fact? In any event, his remark suggests that he has not read even *The Joy of Gay Sex*, for it does contain discussions of alleged oppresion.

It does not seem likely that Mr. Martin is a parent, or he would not have confused the two very different roles of parenthood and child service. Parenthood involves the creation of another human being for whom one has a supreme responsibility for twenty years, and with whom one has a continuing relationship that terminates only with death. (I should say that adoptive parenthood partakes in this relationship in all the essentials.) This unique, magnificent, and, incidentally, unpaid relationship he equates with a variety of roles in which, without ultimate responsibility or long-term commitment, people deal with children as a means of earning a living. It is no doubt the case that a substantial proportion of those who do this are homosexual.



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(Whether they are also gay is a question to be answered only by acquaintance.) It is also no doubt the case that a much smaller proportion of the world's biological parents are homosexuals, and a still smaller proportion of the active ones.

I AM relieved that my dilatory habits kept my essay from appearing in the December issue, else Toni Bordoni might have accused me of fomenting Harvey Milk's "assassination."

Mr. Bordoni makes a strange charge against my article, viz., that it *purports* to deny that homosexuals are "gay." If he thinks the article does not really make such a denial, what is he complaining about? All my remarks about homosexual behavior which he cites are based on pro-homosexual sources; I did not allege them to be typical of homosexuals (except the promiscuity, which is, for males at least, well attested by all sources and disputed by none). I did not claim that when homosexuals are happy it is because they are irresponsible.

As to his astonishing claim that the pathologies he concedes exist are the result of millennia of persecution, it should be necessary only to point out that no one can be persecuted before conception. No one, homosexual or otherwise, has been persecuted for "millennia." As to his even more astonishing claim that homosexuals are the most oppressed of all minorities, I suppose this must be necessary to maintain to explain why widespread pathologies have developed among homosexuals that have not developed among other minorities, e.g., blacks and Jews.

The only evidence he cites is the unsubstantiated claim of unspecified writers that "hundreds of thousands, if not millions" of homosexuals were burned at the stake. On this sort of evidence he might as well claim "billions, if not trillions." No doubt all the documentation for these mass slaughters has been destroyed by the Heterosexist Conspiracy.

Nowhere did I tell homosexuals what they should call themselves. At the outset I did discuss what *I* would call them, and at the end I did suggest that the term "gay" is not universally appropriate to homosexuals. If this is patronizing, heterosexist, and colonialist, so be it. Probably if the National Heterosexual Task Force were to decree that heterosexuals should call themselves "normal," Mr. Bordoni would do a little colonizing and patronizing himself.

IT WOULD BE easier to comment on the "snide rhetorical tenor" alleged by John G. Wilkinson had he specified one or more examples of it. There is a certain novelty to his charge that I am an inquisitor burning homosexuals at the stake (rather than an SS-trooper gassing them), but that is about all I can say for it.

My principal objection to *Homosexualities* was its considerable tendentiousness. But when I read Mr. Wilkinson on sources "more to my liking," I wonder whether he can have read my article itself, rather than depending on word-of-mouth accounts. These other sources were indeed *more* tendentious than *Homosexualities*, but in the same direction, for they were all staunchly pro-homosexual. As to the more lurid specializations, I did not object to any opinion maintained thereupon by the authors of *Homosexualities*, but to their omitting to mention them. Mr. Wilkinson is correct in decrying any attempt to make the bizarre fringes of homosexual life typical of all of it. But I did not try to do so, as any fair-minded reading of my essay will show. Still, I am not going to sweep them under the rug as he would have me do.

When Mr. Wilkinson puts the real problem as who is the homosexual to be and how is his experience to be made fulfilling, he begs a number of obvious and important questions. I said that *Faggots* was "of course beginning to be denounced by the activists" because it was predictable that it would be. After all, Larry Kramer's picture of much homosexual life is far more negative than anything in my essay, and look what happened to me. The extent of the personal abuse leveled in these letters leaves very little over for Kramer. I am glad, however, to learn that some homosexuals are taking his novel seriously. If Mr. Wilkinson really thinks my essay is "sensational," he does not know what sensationalism is.

If I may stand Mr. Wilkinson's final remark on its head, it does not matter how clearly one sees things as they ought to be if one does not see them as they are, and if one does not see them as they are, it is very unlikely that one will ever

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see them as they can be. And that is the important vision.

DOUGLASS ROBY's logic on nomenclature is fuzzy. "Black" is hardly misleading in the way that "gay" is. I would have thought that it was clear that all homosexuals are homosexual.

My article did not indicate that most homosexuals are mentally ill. This charge, like so many others in these letters, is not specified because there is no evidence for it.

Mr. Roby cannot have read my article with very close attention, or he would have noticed my reference to and condemnation of sadomasochism among heterosexuals, but it would be interesting to know what sort of repression he thinks I advocate. After all, I did advocate the legalization of sexual acts between consenting adults and oppose laws to ban homosexual schoolteachers. There is not a great deal of scope for repression in such a position.

Mr. Roby's learned reference to the *Voelkischer Beobachter* makes his charge of Nazism a little more elegantly than his fellows. The tactic is morally no less shabby for the poshness of its expression.

I FEAR Elan Garonzik is confusing the human race with civilization, two entities which are, regrettably, not coextensive. Whether or not it was a homosexual who painted the caves at Lascaux, I cannot say. Apparently Mr. Garonzik's detestation of speculation about the sexual preference of our ancestors is inadequate to keep him from doing it. The ritualized pederasty of 5th-century Athens was quite unlike modern homosexuality. But let us say, *arguendo*, that Socrates, as well as Leonardo, was as homosexual as the next man. What of it? My essay clearly indicated my belief that "homosexuals as a group are as gifted and intelligent as anyone else." It is not merely that I "*would* admit and allow that homosexuals have made, and do make, significant contributions." I *have* done so.

Mr. Garonzik's suggestion that homosexuals are better artists because they have no children is certainly unfair to large numbers of gifted and hard-working artists with families (see Steve Kniss's letter). I am not clear as to the import of his final paragraph, unless it be to suggest that the human race does not deserve continuation.

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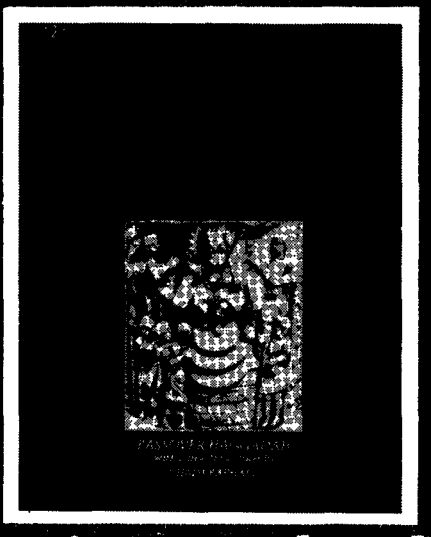

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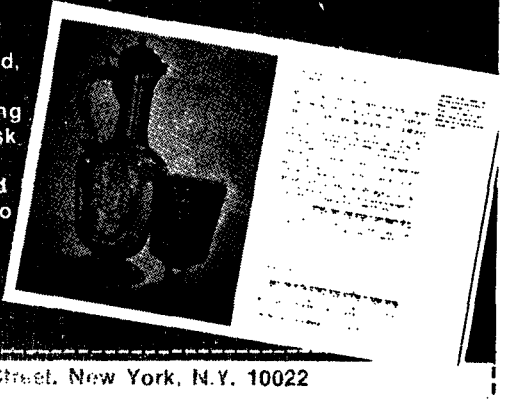

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IF MY essay is the most thinly-disguised harangue against homosexuals that Timothy Cwiek has read in a long time, he certainly leads a sheltered intellectual life. Actually, as a casual reading reveals, it was not a harangue of any sort, nor did I disguise my views even thinly.

Mr. Cwiek's sample of my alleged technique is yet another case of fabrication. I did not discuss the movie *Word Is Out* because I have not seen it. From the book, which I have read, I cited three passages. In one of these, a homosexual man talks about effeminacy among black homosexuals. No selfishness here, and if there is any intolerance, it must be of other homosexuals. In another, a homosexual man talks about the pleasures of nieces and nephews, just as any bachelor uncle might. No unusual selfishness and certainly no intolerance here. In a third, a homosexual man argues that being a homosexual is less demanding than being a heterosexual. A certain amount of both intolerance and selfishness are manifest in this quotation, but it was not cited to argue that either quality is typical of homosexuals.

If this is the most telling example Mr. Cwiek can cite for my alleged "technique," I am content to be judged by a reasonable readership of whatever sexual persuasion.

In his next example, Mr. Cwiek accurately specifies that I agreed that homosexuals are no more likely to molest children than heterosexuals. That, he suggests, is the good news. When he gets to the bad news, specificity goes out the window; I am alleged to have gone off on an "emotional tangent" about an alleged Boston pederasty ring. Mr. Cwiek has to cloak his charge in language this vague because my text will support nothing precise. For I simply noted that a number of Boston-area men had been indicted for alleged sexual relations with adolescent males. I then noted that because none of the cases had come to trial I would not discuss them further. I then moved to a discussion of statements issued by gay activists arguing that the acts alleged, even if proven, should not be considered illegal. This is what Mr. Cwiek calls "feverish self-righteousness," a case of projection if ever there was one.

I will not pretend that I had not formed opinions about the subject before taking up the task of writing my essay. But in that task I reexamined them all, and revised many of my views, some in directions that Mr. Cwiek would approve, others not. I am sure that my mind was less made up than was his when he picked up my article.

DAVID A. KARNES's letter is a sad commentary on the state of education. It is hard to know which is more distressing: the inability of this Harvard student to read a magazine article, or the ideologized vulgarity of his treatment of what he imagines I have written.

He begins by faulting my understanding of the oppression not only of homosexuals but also of Jews and blacks. The latter groups I mentioned only in passing, and never in terms that could provide evidence for Mr. Karnes.

What stands out most clearly in the smokescreen surrounding his discussion of discrimination against homosexuals is that he offers no evidence that I am wrong in my estimate that homosexuals are relatively not much discriminated against. In place of evidence, he offers the repeated assertion that I am wrong because I was wrong.

I expressed, he says, "incredulity" at the existence of sado-masochism among homosexuals. I expressed no such incredulity; the existence of such behavior is a sad reality. My discussion was concerned entirely with analyzing a facile defense of sado-masochism in a current pro-homosexual book. It is interesting to note that underneath all his cant Mr. Karnes seems to agree with me that sado-masochism may be harmful to people and other living things, but he assigns a cause of this unsatisfactory phenomenon that has become inevitable in these self-indulgent days. Like absolutely everything else undesirable, sado-masochism is always the fault of someone else. Specifically, sado-masochism is said to be caused by the alleged oppression of homosexuals by the rest of society. Mr. Karnes's formulation may provide an explanation of sorts for masochism, but he does not even address the genesis of sadism. And it would be interesting to know what varieties of psychosexual derangement Mr. Karnes thinks oppression breeds in Jews and blacks, not to mention what oppressions accounted for the divine Marquis himself.

Although it is a small point, it is typical that the one time Mr. Karnes quotes me directly he gets it wrong: I did not call *Faggots* "remarkable." Nor did I ridicule homosexual activists for criticizing the book: I simply noted that they had, predictably, done so.

Mr. Karnes diagnoses me as a sufferer from homophobia, which I take to mean that I hate homosexuals. It is typical of his half-baked approach that he can say this of someone about whose personal life and acquaintance he is unrelievedly ignorant. I did not, of course, end by saying "some of my best friends are gay," and Mr. Karnes's shabby distortion of the point I did make is no substitute for analysis of it.

Although Mr. Karnes concedes that "gay-community spokespersons" lie about the realities of homosexual life, he defends the lie on the grounds that it is necessary for homosexuals to believe it in order to "feel good about themselves."

Exactly.

He continues his misstatements of my text by objecting to my "utterly distorted portrayals of the movie *Word Is Out* [and] the book *The Joy of Gay Sex*." The fact is that I did not portray the movie *Word Is Out* in any fashion whatever. I mentioned it merely as the source of the book of the same name; and my only characterization of the book was that it is "superior." As to my treatment of *The Joy of Gay Sex*, anyone who buys a copy when it goes on remainder will see that I have, for reasons of good taste, probably made it seem rather less lurid than it really is.

It is quite delicious that a student at Harvard College should seek to denigrate another's views by calling them "ruling-class thinking." It is of course true that I wrote the piece with a good deal of personal distress. I foresaw that it would almost certainly prove offensive to many homosexuals. It occurred to me that it might be misused by anti-homosexual bigots. Indeed, I considered that the article might best not be written, but on balance concluded that nothing was to be gained for rational discussion and a good deal lost by suppressing my views merely because they might prove inconvenient.

THIS group of letters is characterized by two qualities. First, these

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correspondents take me to task for having made a great many statements that I did not make and which are in sharp conflict with statements that I did make. I do not know whether these are deliberate distortions or the result of hysteria, but it seems unlikely that all of them are the result of dyslexia.

Second, the response of these correspondents is astonishingly immoderate. None is content to say calmly that I am wrong and to show why. Rather, they concentrate their space on a level of personal vilification unprecedented in my experience as a controversialist. And this in the face of an essay that was deliberately pitched at a low key. I did not mention names and never criticized individuals except as makers of arguments. Nor did I deal except tangentially with homosexual activism. I did not, for example, express a view (which I do hold) that so-called "gay-media" organizations openly call for a manipulation of television that is nearly totalitarian. That so restrained a piece should have provoked so violent a response is not evidence for either the reasonableness or stability of homosexual advocacy.

Passers-by

To the Editor of Commentary:

Despite a number of interesting observations, the essay "Passers-by: The Soviet Jew as Intellectual" [December 1978] by Simon Markish seems to me to be gravely in error. Mr. Markish has not directly witnessed the events of a crucial period in the life of the Russian-Jewish intelligentsia he tries to interpret—the period since 1970 when he left the Soviet Union. The essay abounds in misleading statements and inappropriate moralizing. The reader is left in the dark as to what Mr. Markish means by the term Jewish intelligentsia as differentiated from the Russian intelligentsia. He deals with the so-called intellectuals who sit and drink with him at the same table as Alexander Chakovskii, the ignominious editor of *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. In saying that "high party and state officials, as well as KGB generals, strive to enter the salons of the discontented intelligentsia," Mr. Markish is slandering many members of that dedicated intelligentsia. Did Mr. Markish visit many such KGB-infested dens while he was in Moscow? He cherishes his nostalgia for Hungary, a way-station in his odyssey to Israel, but he does not allow Russian settlers in Israel to have any nostalgic feelings for Russia. To Soviet intellectuals in Israel he recommends—amnesia. Quoting the whole of his own 1975 speech in Tel Aviv, Mr. Markish appeals to us "to burn . . . in ourselves . . . the mean Soviet man." He should follow his own advice. He twice blames Ephraim Sevela for being a double Soviet-Arab agent, although he also says that "there's no proof" of this. He sees religious enthusiasm in Russia as akin to drugs, in accordance with the doctrine "religion is the opiate of the people."

The "discontented Jewish intelligentsia," seen by the authorities as the core of the dissident movement, finds no place in Mr. Markish's description. He failed to join the dissident protest openly while he was in Moscow, at a time when stones shrieked in anguish. His hatred for the dissidents triggers his imagination: he even identifies Sevela with the dissidents, although there were no ties whatsoever between them. Mr. Markish does not praise heroic Jews like Podrabinek and Superfinn. Is it because he cannot ascertain whether or not they have accepted Jesus in order to withstand the sadistic absurdities of Soviet life? Their courageous nonviolent struggle with the Soviet oligarchs bluntly refutes Mr. Markish's elementary and dangerous philosophy: "To submit to violence is in some degree to participate in it."

Surely this generalization has exceptions in Mr. Markish's personal experience. Among others, it blasphemes the memory of Osip Mandelstam. Mr. Markish uses Mandelstam's poem as an epigraph, borrows his title from it, yet misinterprets the crucial notion of the "passer-by." While he rebukes Russian Jews for being just passers-by in Israel, alien to the surrounding culture, as they were *there*, in Russia, a closer reading of Mandelstam's poem reveals the opposite meaning. In the poem, a Jewish passer-by goes along roads cleared of snow and coldness with bearded muzhiks, a symbol of old Russia; he sees Blok's fair ladies with kerchiefs and, despite angry mongrels (whatever they might symbolize), enters taverns and houses with their scarlet-rose-like samovar tops; tea is an image of Russian meditative life, the wine of spirit, mystical bread, and warmth. The phenomenon of Jewish Christians, widespread in Russia and emphasized by Nadezhda Mandelstam, is entirely ignored by Mr. Markish, although it is highly relevant for an understanding of present-day Russian intellectual life. Does the overuse in a negative context of a poem written by the greatest Russian-Jewish martyr at the time when he embraced Christianity really illustrate Mr. Markish's lofty intention "to honor the memory of martyrs"?

Mr. Markish attacks "devious Glazov" for being "an active Christian," who "suddenly remembers he is a Jew and begins, no less actively, to prepare for the land of his forefathers and then, Israeli visa in hand, sets off straight for Boston" without "the slightest intention of going to Israel" at any stage at all. It is perhaps surprising to hear these accusations from a person who slipped out of Russia during the dissidents' turmoil after marrying a Hungarian (for which I would never reproach him), and who preaches to those who failed to reach Israel from his picturesque Geneva, another leg of his own lengthy journey to the land of his forefathers, a journey still incomplete. In the fifteen lines which Mr. Markish allocates to me, the fact that I left Russia with an Israeli visa, an unshakable rule of the Soviet game in the 70's for persons of Jewish origin, is the only true fact. At least fifteen other points in this passage reveal his inadequate information, misjudgment, or worse—all of which render redundant the commandment "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

Being "an active Christian," perhaps, means that for three painful years I was blacklisted for having signed, in February 1968, a "Petition of Twelve" which was presented to the Communist Parties' Consultative Conference in Budapest, where we protested against Soviet human-rights repressions, "discrimination against national minorities," and "trampling on the rights of man in our country." (See *The Jews in Soviet Russia*, edited by Lionel Kochan, Oxford, 1978, p. 331.) In accordance with my faith, I wanted to fulfill my human duty, and to a great extent I acted as a Jew among both Jews and non-Jews, to defend the rights of Soviet Jewry. Since Mr. Markish does not care about non-Jews, and since I still remember with gratitude that he tried to help me a few times in

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my hopeless situation, I am tempted to ask him: did he see a Jew in me at that time?

Although—and largely because—I was registered in my middle teens as a Russian (*mea culpa*!), throughout my adult life I was treated as a Jew, quite often unkindly. While I was growing up among Russians in a country of religious compartmentalization—my father dead in my early childhood, my family life shattered, intermittent despair strangling my spirit until the late 50's—my Jewish self-awareness was a source of psychological discoveries and long spiritual search; as a result, in my late twenties I became, and since then have remained, a Jewish Christian. Although in the eyes of the anti-Semitic and God-hating authorities I was invariably a double criminal, my religious vision, approaching Judaism, Roman Catholicism, and Russian Orthodoxy as a sacred interwoven triangle, saved me, I think, from self-destruction.

In March 1971, in Moscow, I finished my book, *How Narrow the Gate* (misquoted by Mr. Markish), and gave it to several people to read. Also at this time, two of my closest friends were suddenly thrown in jail for their wish to leave for Israel. To one of them, a former colleague, I owed my recovery from a near-fatal illness and my day-to-day survival during those troubled years. The courageous action of these men, their imprisonment and hunger strikes, contrasted with the relative indifference of some of my Russian friends to their fate, shocked me to the core of my being. It was then, after painful reflection, that I asked the Soviet authorities in my protest and essays to release my friends and to allow me, a blacklisted person, to leave for Israel as well. During those weeks, to use Mr. Markish's words, I "suddenly remembered" that I was a Jew. Although I received, as usual, no answer from the authorities, nevertheless I felt a deep relief when my colleague left Russia independently of my efforts.

Officially I did not apply for a visa until the end of January of the following year, which conflicts with Mr. Markish's description that I began "no less actively to prepare myself for the land of my forefathers." I was not in a hurry. None of my essays, written at a certain risk and abstracted in the underground journal, *Chronicle of Current Events*, was published abroad. Later, I understood that Russians saw me as a Jew, while Jews looked upon me as a Christian. I can understand that not everybody was happy to read these essays, in which I defended the Jewish right of repatriation along with the right of Russian priests and dissidents to speak out.

In addition, I had become seriously disappointed by some aspects of the Jewish exodus movement. By December 1971, my information about Israel convinced me that, with my convictions and those of my wife, I would be only little less a leper there than in official Russia. But bridges had been burned behind me, and, at a time when each departure of a Soviet intellectual was looked upon as a miracle, the only way out of the deadly grip was to continue writing about the life around me until the authorities imprisoned me or allowed me to leave. Our appeal defending Aleksandr Galich (see the New York *Times*, February 12, 1972), and especially our "Letter of Five" to the *Times* (March 9, 1972) sealed my fate. Both documents were dedicated to my "Russian" friends, in Mr. Markish's sense, and were a good expression of my thoughts at that time. Contrary to the impression given by an incredible mistake in the translation of the first sentence in the letter, which attracted some attention, four of us, including myself, did not yet have "an Israeli visa in hand." Mr. Markish, obviously, did not see the Russian original. When, three weeks after the publication of the letter, I was informed that I could leave Russia, the land where, to use the words of our last letter, I was going to leave a part of my heart, I did not "set off straight for Boston." With my wife and three children I flew over Hungary (where non-devious Markish was gathering his strength for another lap of his lifelong trip to Israel) to Rome, and only months later, in the fall of 1972, to New York. It was early 1973 when I moved to Boston, where a temporary position had unexpectedly opened up.

Mr. Markish goes on to suggest: "[Glazov] then publishes a book, written according to him in Moscow, and in the book reports that he had never had the slightest intention of going to Israel because 'the Jews despise the gentle son of Mary of Bethlehem.'" This is another example of Mr. Markish's sleight-of-hand in the Soviet manner. The negotiations with the publisher took place in Rome in the first weeks of my stay there, and it was then that I decided that the book, which had been smuggled much earlier to London, would be published without any changes, with the addition of only a short note at the final stage of printing. Although while writing the book I was desperately trying to avoid the émigré's fate, Mr. Markish could have read on the very same pages he misquotes phrases refuting his statement about my intentions. By manipulating my remarks out of context, Mr. Markish not only distorts them, but erroneously presents them as my sole motivation for not going to Israel. He interpolates the word "Jews" instead of my original "my blood-brothers," creating an anti-Semitic innuendo which is far from present in my text. This interpolation indicates that I viewed myself as an outsider, whereas in point of fact I was speaking from within Jewry. Mr. Markish interprets my behavior even less convincingly than he does Mandelstam's poem. My escape from the concentration camp known as the Soviet Union was over. Grateful to Israel, I could extend my thanks or apologies to all those who were happy or disappointed with my survival.

Although defining Jews as "those who consider themselves Jews by their free and conscious choice," Mr. Markish excludes me from Jewry without my consent. Jewishness is my birthright. If it is proved one day that Jesus Christ and Jewishness are incompatible, I shall stay with Jesus and his love for all men, but no one has yet been able to convince me that these two greatest events in world history and spirit can be separated.

YURI GLAZOV
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Not even the din of anti-Shah riots in the streets of what once was Shushan could muffle the creaking of Mordecai's bones turning in his grave. The savior of his people, the man who engineered the plot that toppled Haman has endured ("lived" is hardly the correct word) to see his name besmirched as a sycophantic renegade. Simon Markish's reference to "Mordecais," who, disdainful of their people, curry favors with Artaxerxes for selfish reasons, calls for breast-

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thumping and appropriate penance. As a starter, I would suggest reciting the *Megillah* three times and repeating seven times the traditional "Haman be cursed, blessed be Mordecai."

SAMUEL VAISRUB
Journal of the American Medical Association
Chicago, Illinois

SIMON MARKISH writes:

I have essentially no reply to make to Yuri Glazov, since his letter does not touch upon the substance of my article.

Any discussion of my personal circumstances or details of Mr. Glazov's biography would, I feel, be irrelevant.

I will confine myself, then, to the following three comments:

1. This is the statement in full which Mr. Glazov claims was distorted through having been partially quoted: "I would have had to watch my step in Israel and speak of the greatness of the Jewish people with my blood brothers, who despise the gentle son of Mary of Bethlehem" (Yuri Glazov, *"Tesnye vrata, Vozrozdeni russkoj intelligencii,"* Overseas Publications Interchange, London, 1973, pp. 9-10).

The quotation marks in my article, therefore, should have been placed after, not before, the words "the Jews." If it appears to the reader that this involuntary distortion has prejudiced Mr. Glazov or has in any way misrepresented his or my own views, I am quite prepared to present my apologies to Mr. Glazov.

2. I have not read the "Letter of Five" to the New York *Times*, either in English or in Russian; I never even suspected it had been written.

3. I do not know Mr. Glazov personally—certainly one cannot consider a chance encounter and a five-minute chat in the street as having gotten to know each other—and, to my knowledge, I have never had occasion to provide him with any assistance.

As for Samuel Vaisrub's letter, he is quite right, and I intend to take him up on his suggestion.

I might just add that when I wrote in my conclusion that we must "destroy in ourselves the . . . Soviet man," I did not exclude myself. Like all my ex-fellow citizens, I left with the same "cultural" baggage and am not at all sure I can ever completely succeed in ridding myself of it.

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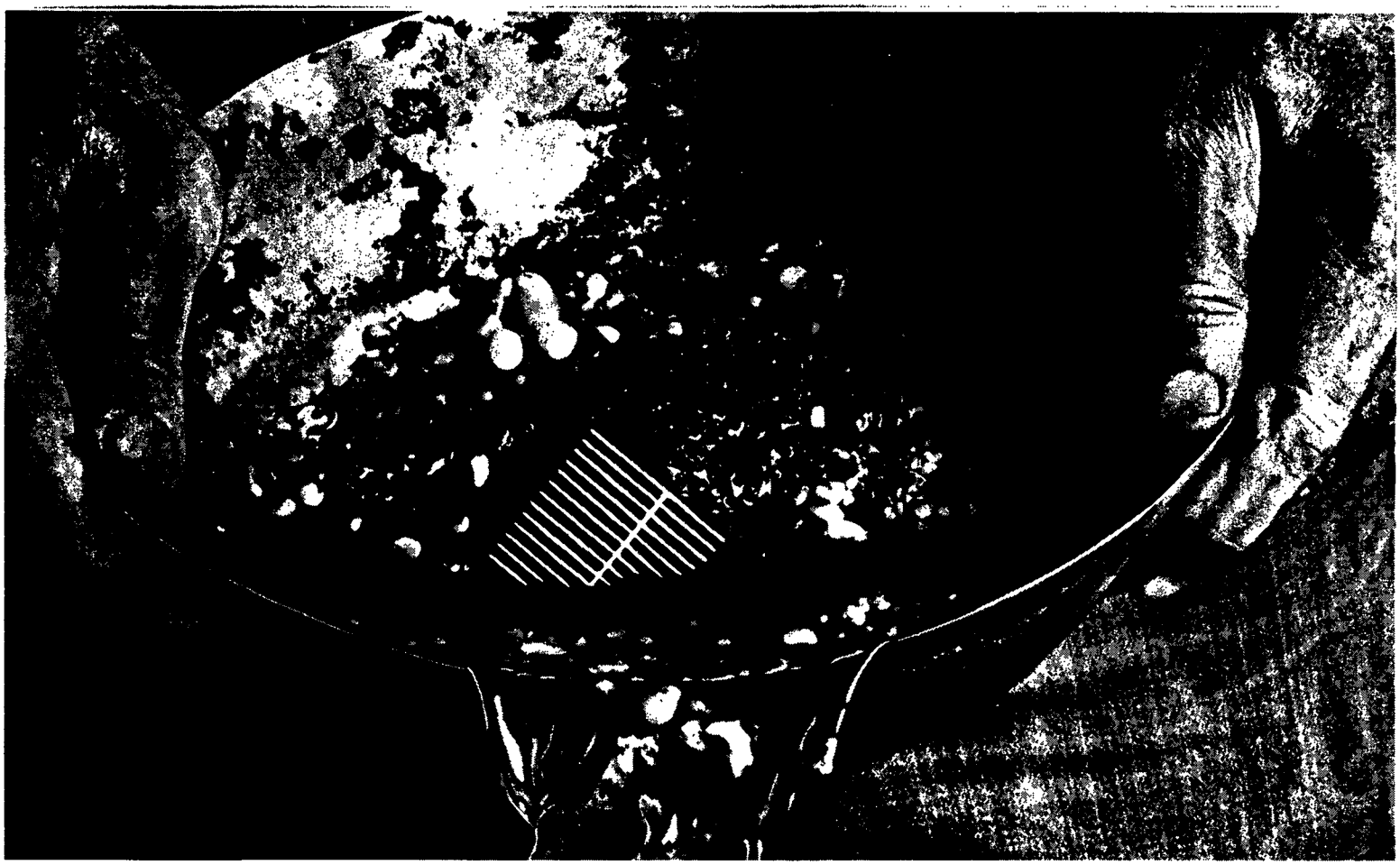

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This improved gold-plating technique is another way Western Electric is working to hold down the cost, while continually raising the quality of your phone service.

Keeping your communications system the best in the world.

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Selling Them the Rope

Business & the Soviets

Carl Gershman

I must say that Lenin foretold this whole process. Lenin, who spent most of his life in the West and not in Russia, who knew the West much better than Russia, always wrote and said that the Western capitalists would do anything to strengthen the economy of the USSR. They will compete with each other to sell us goods cheaper and sell them quicker, so that the Soviets will buy from one rather than from the other. He said: they will bring it themselves without thinking about their future. And, in a difficult moment, at a party meeting in Moscow, he said: "Comrades, don't panic, when things go very hard for us, we will give a rope to the bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie will hang itself."

Then, Karl Radek, . . . who was a very resourceful wit, said: "Vladimir Ilyich, but where are we going to get enough rope to hang the whole bourgeoisie?" Lenin effortlessly replied: "They'll supply us with it."

—ALEKSANDR SOLZHENITSYN,
June 30, 1975, in a speech to the AFL-CIO

THE issue of trade has figured prominently in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union ever since the Nixon administration initiated the policy of détente almost a decade ago. Already in 1969, even before détente had become the central theme of the Nixon administration's foreign policy, the President signed into law the Export Administration Act, replacing the Export Control Act which had been adopted two decades earlier. The new act greatly liberalized restrictions on the export of goods and technology to the Soviet Union. While continuing to prohibit exports that would "make a significant contribution to the military potential" of the Soviet Union, it lifted the ban against those that would strengthen the Soviet Union's "economic potential." The change grew out of pressure from American corporations anxious to do business with Moscow and fearful of losing contracts to competitors in Europe and Japan. But to President Nixon and his principal foreign-policy adviser, Henry Kissinger, the change had chiefly political, not economic, significance. They saw increased U.S.-Soviet trade as an essential component of détente.

The idea of using trade to promote détente with the Soviet Union did not originate with the Nixon administration. President Johnson too had expressed the desire to "build bridges" to the Communist world through trade. A special committee he appointed to look into the matter had concluded that trade could be "one of our most powerful tools of national policy," since it would enable us to "influence the internal development and the external policies of European Communist societies along paths favorable to our purpose and to world peace." Kissinger's version of this general view was the concept of linkage, according to which increased U.S.-Soviet trade would help to establish "a web of constructive relationships" that would give the Soviet Union a stake in peace by making it "more conscious of what it would lose by a return to confrontation." Finally, increased trade might also, in Kissinger's words, "leaven the autarchic tendencies of the Soviet system" and eventually lead to the integration of the Soviet Union into the world economic system and thus to the gradual liberalization of Soviet society.

The Nixon administration's eagerness to embark on this new course was evident in the terms of the trade agreement reached with Moscow on October 18, 1972. It provided both for the financing of Soviet purchases with long-term loans through the Export-Import Bank, and for a request to Congress to grant most-favored-nation tariffs for Soviet imports. Congress, however, reacting to the Yom Kippur War and the continuing harassment of Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn, and other Soviet dissidents, was in no mood to grant Moscow such generous terms. It added the Jackson amendment to the Trade Reform Act, making freer emigration from the Soviet Union the condition for lowering tariffs and qualifying for Export-Import Bank loans. Subsequently, Congress adopted the Stevenson amendment limiting Export-Import Bank credits to $300 million without further congressional approval. The Russians objected to these amendments—especially the credit ceiling, for they had been willing to compromise on the

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emigration issue—and in early 1975 canceled the whole agreement.

The issue of U.S.-Soviet trade became a point of controversy once again last summer when President Carter, in response to the trials of Soviet dissidents Anatoly Shcharansky and Aleksandr Ginsburg, blocked the sale of a Sperry-Univac computer system to the USSR and placed the export of oil and gas technology to the Soviet Union under government control. Moscow immediately charged that the President was taking a "path of confrontation," and a U.S. Commerce Department official warned that the trade curbs would have "a substantial chilling effect on exports." The Carter administration quickly backed off, and approved all 74 of the applications submitted for the export of oil technology to the Soviet Union. Last December, the President dispatched Commerce Secretary Juanita M. Kreps and Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal to Moscow with the message that the administration wanted more trade between the two countries and was in favor of removing some of the obstacles standing in its way—presumably the Stevenson and Jackson amendments.

IT APPEARS, then, that another round is looming in the ongoing battle over the trade issue. Once again it is being argued that the United States, with its balance-of-payments deficit running at record levels, has a vital economic stake in trade with the Soviet Union and a vital political stake as well, since closer economic ties will promote the liberalizing tendencies inside the Soviet Union and establish a foundation for improved U.S.-Soviet relations. William Verity, the chairman of Armco Steel Corporation and co-chairman of the U.S.-USSR Trade and Economic Council, said recently that "a policy of holding trade hostage for political reasons is self-defeating." And Averell Harriman, at a luncheon meeting of U.S. business leaders in Moscow, blamed U.S. congressional leaders for the "outrage that for all these years we cannot have normal trade relations with the second greatest nation in the world." In Harriman's view, which is shared by many businessmen, U.S.-Soviet trade would blossom were it not for anti-Soviet forces in this country.

And yet from a strictly economic point of view, trade with the Soviet Union hardly merits the attention that has been lavished upon it by U.S. businessmen and trade officials. In 1978, for example, the volume of trade with the USSR was $2.8 billion, an all-time high, but just over one-third the amount of trade that was carried on with Taiwan last year. One would hardly know this from comparing the sheer volume of congressional studies, books, conferences, and news articles devoted to the two subjects; and yet in a sense it is beside the point. It is not the present level of trade with the Soviet Union that excites U.S. businessmen, but the possibility of exploiting the vast, hitherto forbidden Soviet market. "Otherwise cautious executives," Marshall I. Goldman has written, "all but trample over one another in their effort to establish a foothold on this new frontier."*

But how new is this frontier? When the question of trade is debated, it is frequently forgotten that there are many historical precedents for the current efforts to expand trade with the Soviet Union, and while they explain why Russia is so interested in trade, they do little to justify business's continuing optimism.

THERE was substantial Western investment in Russia during the half-century preceding the Bolshevik revolution. The coal, iron, and steel-producing region of southern Russia was developed with capital and technical assistance from British, French, and Belgian companies, and German and Dutch firms helped develop these industries in the north. The "iron king" of Russia was an Englishman, John Hughes, who built the mining and metallurgical factories of Yuzovka—named in his honor—in the Donets Basin. The Swedish Nobel brothers developed the oil fields of Baku on the shores of the Caspian Sea, which helped make Russia the world's leading oil producer by 1901. The Trans-Siberian railway was built with Western (principally French) capital and technology, and the parallel telegraph line was built and operated by the Danes. Many American firms, too, participated in Russia's industrial development during this period. International Harvester was the largest manufacturer of agricultural equipment in pre-war Russia and Singer Sewing Machine had holdings worth over $100 million and employed a sales force in Russia of over 27,000 people in 1914.

When the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917, all this came to an end, as the new regime expropriated all Western capital investment and financial assets. But even this unprecedented act of industrial theft did not discourage Western business interests, eager to regain access to the alluring Russian market. The opportunity came soon enough. Just three years after the revolution, with the Russian economy in a state of total wreckage, Lenin invited Western firms back to Moscow and asked them to set up concessions. In the West this new policy was welcomed as a sign of moderation and a move toward "peaceful coexistence," but Lenin, as it turned out, had not ceased to be a Bolshevik. "Concessions—," he told a meeting of the Soviet Communist party in 1920, "these do not mean peace with capitalism, but war on a new plane." Lenin's sole objective was to revive Soviet industry, and, as subsequent events revealed, he had every intention of expropriating the concessions after production had been organized and sufficient capital, equipment, and skills had been brought into the country.

* *Détente and Dollars: Doing Business with the Soviets*, Basic Books, 1975, p. 5.

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Nevertheless, Western firms, oblivious to the risks involved, flocked to the Soviet Union once more, bringing with them technicians, machinery, technology, and capital. From Germany came such major companies as Krupp, Thyssens, Otto Wolff, Siemens, the AEG, Junkers, Telefunken, and I.G. Farben; from the United States, General Electric, Westinghouse, International Harvester, RCA, Alcoa, Singer, Du Pont, Ford, and Standard Oil of New York. Concessions were also established by important English, French, Swedish, Danish, and Austrian companies. All told, the government granted about 350 concessions, and their impact on the Soviet economy was extraordinary. A recent study, which analyzes in painstaking detail the impact of the concessions on each sector of the Soviet economy, concluded that by 1930 there was not a single important industrial process—from mining, oil production, metallurgy, chemicals, transportation, communications, textiles, and forestry to the production of industrial and agricultural equipment and the generation of electrical power—which did not derive from transferred Western technology.*

IF THE advantages to the Soviets from all this are obvious, one is hard-pressed to identify any benefits accruing to the Western firms involved. By 1933, there were no foreign manufacturing concessions left in the Soviet Union, even though many firms had signed contracts covering periods of thirty and even fifty years. Some of the concessions were closed down by force, but the more common methods were punitive taxation, breach of contract, legal harassment, and disruptions by workers. The largest concession of all, the British mining company Lena Goldfields Ltd., had assembled its technicians, invested almost $80 million in equipment, and completed its surveys when it was attacked as a "weed in the socialist system." The OGPU raided its units, threw out many of its personnel, and jailed several of its leading technicians on charges of "industrial espionage."

In only a handful of special cases was compensation granted. Armand Hammer, who represented 38 large American firms in their dealings with Moscow and was a political sympathizer (his father had been a member of the steering committee that founded the U.S. Communist party in 1919), was compensated for the liquidation of his asbestos and pencil-manufacturing concessions. (Interestingly, these were also the only concessions to earn significant profits.) The Soviet authorities also agreed to compensate Averell Harriman for the liquidation of his manganese concession in Chiaturi in 1928, but only after Harriman had agreed to arrange a long-term loan for them in the United States (aimed both at demonstrating Soviet credit-worthiness and undermining official U.S. policy against such loans). Most firms were not so lucky, however, and those which had lost their holdings once before in 1917 had the dubious distinction of being expropriated twice.

Far from signaling the end of Western business involvement in the Soviet Union, the liquidation of foreign concessions marked the beginning of the most massive transfer of Western technical resources yet undertaken in the form of American assistance to the first Five-Year Plan (1928-33). The plan, still thought by many to have been a remarkable Soviet achievement, turns out to have been largely the work of American management and engineering, as Stalin acknowledged in 1944, when he told Eric Johnston, the president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, that two-thirds of the large industrial projects in the Soviet Union had been built with American assistance.

America's leading industrial-architecture firm, the Albert Kahn Company, was contracted to design and supervise the major units of the plan, as well as to organize Gosproektstroi, the Soviet Design Bureau. Kahn's engineer, G.K. Scrymgeour, directed Gosproektstroi and also chaired the Building Commission of the Supreme Council of the National Economy, while various other American companies got individual contracts to build the mammoth separate projects outlined in the plan.† Du Pont built two nitric-acid plants at Kalinin and Shostka; the Arthur G. McKee Company of Cleveland managed the construction of the steelworks at Magnitogorsk, a replica of U.S. Steel's Gary Indiana plant and the largest steel complex in the world; Colonel Hugh Cooper, the builder of the great Wilson Dam at Muscle Shoals, supervised the construction of the even larger Dniepr Dam, for which he received the Order of the Toilers of the Red Banner. In addition, General Electric built and installed the massive generators at the Dniepr and also designed the Kharkov turbine works which had a manufacturing capacity two-and-a-half times greater than its own central plant in Schenectady. The Austin Company, builder of Ford's River Rouge factory, constructed the great auto plant at Gorki (known as "the Detroit of Russia"), while the USSR's other auto plants, at Moscow and Yaroslavl, were built respectively by the A.J. Brandt Company of Detroit and the Hercules Motor Corporation of Canton, Ohio. Austin's John Calder (whom Maurice Hindus called "Russia's miracle man" at the time) managed the construction of the Stalingrad Tractor Plant, Europe's

* See Antony C. Sutton's *Western Technology and Soviet Economic Development 1917-1930*, Hoover Institution Publications, 1968. Two subsequent volumes by Sutton describe the transfer process and assess its contribution to Soviet economic development for the periods 1930-45 and 1945-65.

† Antony C. Sutton, in this context, defines the phrase "built by Western companies" to mean not just the management of construction and equipment installation, but also the supply of technology, patents, engine-test results, and operator training, as well as supervision of the plant during its initial period of operation. The Russians supplied labor, semi-fabricated materials, and middle-level engineers whose chief job was to learn from the Americans.

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largest, which was first built in the United States, then dismantled and shipped to Russia, where it was put together again. For this achievement (and for salvaging the construction of another plant at Chelyabinsk after an abortive effort by a Russian team of engineers) Calder received the Order of Lenin, as did his colleague, Leon A. Swajian, who was chief engineer for the construction of an identical tractor plant at Kharkov.

In 1930, *Business Week* proclaimed that Russia, though unrecognized politically, had "come to the aid of depressed American industry." American businessmen, delighted with these Russian contracts, looked forward to a period of expanding U.S.-Soviet trade. Unfortunately, the benefits that American business actually derived from this unprecedented burst of commercial activity proved to be meager and short-lived—as well as absurdly disproportionate to what the Russians gained. In 1930, U.S. exports to Russia reached the all-time high of $230 million, but it was still only a small fraction of total U.S. exports. By 1932, exports had dropped to less than $28 million, and the following year they dropped still further to $14 million. The Soviet government (which had sold grain to finance imports while millions of Russians starved) had simply run out of money.

But even after the Export-Import Bank had been set up in 1934, primarily to finance Soviet purchases, exports still did not increase significantly. The main reason for this was that Russia had by then attained a considerable degree of industrial self-sufficiency, made possible by the willingness of American companies to construct finished plants and assist in their duplication, and to transfer essential technology to the USSR. To its $30-million sale of auto parts, for example, the Ford Motor Company threw in an extra bonus in the form of an agreement to send its technicians to Gorki to introduce Ford production methods* and to bring Soviet engineers to its River Rouge plant for training. (Of the 1,039 Soviet nationals arriving in the U.S. between January 1, 1929 and June 15, 1930, 81 per cent came for industrial-training programs.)

AMERICA'S wartime alliance with the Soviet Union produced still another wave of euphoria at the prospects of trade with the USSR. In 1944, soon after his meeting with Stalin, Eric Johnston wrote in *Nation's Business* that "Russia will be, if not our biggest, at least our most eager customer when the war ends." The following year *Fortune* published a poll showing business leaders to be the "most friendly" toward the USSR of all American groups and also the most hopeful about postwar relations—annual exports to Russia, the magazine predicted, would be between $1 billion and $2 billion. Alas, in 1946 annual U.S. exports to Russia, though still financed by Lend-Lease credits, totalled only $236 million, and even that level would not be reached again for more than a quarter of a century.

While the export controls imposed by the U.S. in 1949 played a part in delaying a new round of Soviet purchases, they had nothing to do with the initial drop in exports after 1946. What happened to cause this drop was precisely what had happened fifteen years earlier when Russia reverted to autarchy immediately after having absorbed an enormous amount of Western technology and equipment. Under Lend-Lease, Russia had received $2.6 billion worth of nonmilitary goods from the U.S. (in addition to $8.5 billion in military hardware), including $1.25 billion of the latest American industrial equipment. Even more significant, however, was the more than $10 billion worth of industrial and military equipment dismantled in Germany and shipped to Russia in the greatest and most systematic looting of a defeated country in the history of war.† From the Soviet Zone the Russians acquired several thousand plants representing 41 per cent of Germany's 1943 industrial capacity, and still more was removed from the Western Allied zones under an agreement allocating 25 per cent of the plants there to the Russians. The booty included such plants as the famous Karl Zeiss factory at Jena which manufactured optical precision instruments, and the Opel autoworks at Brandenburg. (Small wonder that the 1947 Moskvich 401 was a replica of the 1939 Opel Kadett!) Berlin's entire electrical-equipment industry was removed, as was two-thirds of Germany's aircraft and rocket industry, including the enormous underground V-2 rocket plant at Nordhausen which provided the foundation for the Soviet Union's Sputnik program.

Since specialists were needed to bring this new industrial capacity into operation and to develop it further, technicians were also shipped off to Russia. On a single night—October 22, 1946—6,000 German scientists, engineers, and aviation experts, along with 20,000 dependents, were placed on trains and transported to various points

* One of these Americans, Victor Herman, has just published an extraordinary memoir of his experiences in Russia (*Coming Out of the Ice*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 369 pp., $12.95). At the age of sixteen, Herman accompanied his family from their home in Detroit to Gorki, where they were planning to stay for three years working in the auto plants. He ended up spending forty-five years in Russia, eighteen of them in the Gulag, where he encountered many Americans. Herman describes his ordeal with an austerity that makes it all the more horrifying. He claims to be the only survivor of all the men, women, and children from the American village at Gorki who were sent to the Siberian camps—forgotten victims of an earlier period of Soviet-American "cooperation."

† Germany was not the only country looted by Russia. A U.S. mission headed by Ambassador Edwin Pauley in the spring of 1946 concluded that Russia had dismantled and removed $895 million worth of industrial equipment from Manchuria. In addition, $400 million worth of equipment was taken from the Soviet Zone in Austria, while peace treaties with Finland and Rumania resulted in the transfer of $600 million of equipment.

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throughout the Soviet Union where German industry had been reassembled. Once again Russia had become "self-sufficient."

CONTEMPORARY champions of U.S.-Soviet trade* view this historical background as relevant only to the extent that it helps to explain why psychological barriers to the unrestricted expansion of commercial relations with the USSR still exist in the United States. Fears based on past experience are groundless, they argue, since the Soviet Union is a vastly different country today—less oppressive, more stable, and more committed to consumerism—than it was after the devastations of World War II, not to mention during the periods of revolutionary consolidation and forced industrialization. Samuel Pisar, for example, a leading trade advocate, is confident that the American and Soviet economic systems, at one time diametric opposites, are now "actually creeping toward convergence," a process that will accelerate if there is increased trade.†

But how different *is* the Soviet Union today? Like every other country in the world, the USSR has of course changed over the past thirty years, but nothing has happened to alter the nature of its economic relations with the West in any fundamental way. The Soviet Union's chief priority is still the procurement from the West of advanced technology for its heavy industry (machine-building, metalworking, chemicals, and so forth). Though the new emphasis on consumer needs in the ninth Five-Year Plan (1971-75) raised hopes that the Soviet Union would enter the market for consumer goods, this emphasis was dropped when the plan was actually implemented, and the current Five-Year Plan restores producer goods to their traditional preeminence.

The continuing Soviet need for Western technology results directly from the weaknesses of its centralized, state-run, command economy. Much has been written about the inefficiencies of the Soviet economy which produces about half the American GNP using a larger workforce (and which now suffers from a labor shortage). What is not sufficiently appreciated is the degree to which the system, because of its stifling rigidity, is structurally resistant to technological innovation. This problem became acute in the 1960's with the slowdown in the Soviet growth rate and with the realization by Soviet leaders that the country could not keep pace with the West, let alone catch up with it, if it did not obtain access to revolutionary Western innovations in computers and electronics. There is no question that the need for such access was a critical factor in the Soviet conversion to détente.

Indeed, the one change that can be detected in the pattern of Soviet trade relations with the West involves the absorption of Western technology, which no longer occurs at fitful intervals, as it did in the 30's and 40's, but appears, at the moment at least, to have become an uninterrupted process.

Still, the importance of this development should not be exaggerated. It is not the result of changes that have taken place inside the Soviet Union, nor is it evidence that Russia has been drawn into "the disciplines of international economic life," as the original linkage policy had hoped. It merely means that Soviet leaders are satisfied with an economic relationship in which, according to the Soviet journal *Foreign Trade* (1977), the USSR "efficiently uses the benefits of the international division of labor and constantly imports technically advanced plant and the latest licenses and know-how."

And why indeed should they not be satisfied with an arrangement which virtually guarantees greater advantages to the USSR than to its Western partners? If for no other reason, the Soviet Union stands to benefit simply by virtue of its technical backwardness. During the early years of détente, for example, the Nixon administration encouraged top American firms to sign "technological-exchange" agreements with Moscow. The firms had nothing to gain technologically from such agreements, but went along with them in the hope that "exchanges" of this sort might eventually lead to large contracts. The contracts rarely materialized, but the Russians received valuable technology in the meantime. A spokesman for Control Data Corporation, which signed a ten-year agreement with the Soviet Ministry of Science and Technology that included a plan for the joint development of a new super computer, admitted not long ago that the Russians gained fifteen years in research and development by spending just $3 million over three years. And government-to-government exchange agreements, another by-product of the early euphoria over détente, have had the same result. The Apollo-Soyuz space program, one of the better known examples, has been called by Zbigniew Brzezinski "a vehicle for the one-sided transfer from the United States to the USSR of a technology that has obvious military applications."

THE asymmetry of the technological "exchange" relationship is reinforced by the Soviet Union's obsession with secrecy and by its unabashedly predatory approach. While American firms are expected to be forthcoming with technical information, especially if they hope to win contracts, the Russians have been extremely reluctant to divulge information on plant operations, let alone to allow American technicians to visit the plants for which they have been asked to design systems.

At the same time, American firms have trained

* See, for example, *The Psychology of East-West Trade*, by Zygmunt Nagorski, Jr., Mason & Lipscomb, 1974.

† *Coexistence and Commerce: Guidelines for Transactions Between East and West*, McGraw Hill, 1970, p. 8.

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hundreds of Soviet technicians in the U.S., and teams of Soviet specialists—ostensibly looking into possible purchases—have been allowed to tour defense-related American plants. A member of one such group, which closely inspected the Boeing, Lockheed, and McDonnell Douglas factories in 1973 and 1974, admitted privately to a Boeing official that purchases had never been contemplated —meaning, of course, that the group's real purpose had been industrial espionage. Within the FBI, concern has been expressed that Moscow's espionage efforts have expanded in recent years owing to the sharp increase in the number of Soviet citizens here on official business and to the treaty arrangement allowing Soviet ships to call at 40 American ports.

Still another factor that works to the USSR's advantage is that Soviet foreign trade is a state monopoly. As the sole buyer in a situation where there are many sellers—competing American firms as well as firms from Europe and Japan—it has unequal bargaining leverage which it uses not only to bring down prices but also to secure maximum technological benefits that include the provision of technical data and licenses, extensive training of Soviet personnel, and, increasingly, long-term arrangements for the continuous supply of new technology. American firms in high-technology fields like computers, aerospace, and automotives are willing to agree to such arrangements in order to compensate for the high cost of research and development. But the end results favor the Russians, as exemplified in the Soviet purchase not too long ago of space suits for $150,000 which had cost the Americans $20 million apiece to develop.

There have even been some instances where American firms have provided valuable technology in the hope of landing a major contract, only to lose the contract to a competitor. In 1973 the Raytheon Corporation, seeking direct contact with the USSR's Ministry of Civil Aviation to promote the sale of an advanced air-traffic control system (ATC), mounted an elaborate exhibition in Moscow in cooperation with the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration. After Raytheon had invested $220,000 in the exhibition and presented plans for an ATC system more advanced than the one in the United States, the Russians asked for competing bids from four other American and two European companies. They also indicated in the course of the negotiations that an American bid would receive more favorable attention if it were accompanied by an offset purchase of Soviet-made YAK-40 jet aircraft, and if the U.S. granted increased landing rights to Aeroflot. In all, the U.S. companies spent over $500,000 and provided the Russians with quite a lot of valuable technical work before the contract was awarded to a Swedish-Italian consortium.

Not all the American firms dealing with Moscow have been quite so unsuccessful as Raytheon, but according to a prominent U.S. businessman quoted in a recent report in the *Wall Street Journal*, "Nobody is doing the business he expected." (Even the modest U.S. export figures—$2.26 billion in 1978—overstate the amount of trade carried on by high-technology firms, since agricultural products account for more than 75 per cent of U.S. exports to the Soviet Union.) In addition, U.S. businessmen stationed in Moscow have had to work under extremely trying conditions: the enormous, impenetrable Soviet bureaucracy; the bugging of their offices, conference rooms, and private residences by what the *Journal* report called "the omnipresent official eavesdroppers"; the fear for their personal safety, as pointed up by the arrest last June of International Harvester's F. Jay Crawford.

Still, it is all worth it in the opinion of Harold B. Scott, the former president of the U.S.-USSR Trade and Economic Council, for the Soviet Union "will one day be the largest market in the world. The systems put in place there now will determine the patterns of trade. Now is the time when it is crucially important to put our technology there."

With all due respect to Mr. Scott, it is hard to believe that this perpetually alluring Russian market really exists, or if it does exist, that it will one day be ours, especially if we continue to "put our technology there," as he urges. Why should such a market come into being when by selling whole factories (called "turnkey" plants) and training Soviet personnel, we help Russia produce by itself what it might otherwise have to buy from us or from other Western countries? Ironically enough, the way trade has been conducted with the Soviet Union not only does not discourage those autarchic tendencies Kissinger was talking about, but actually reinforces them, even as Soviet purchases of Western technology continue.

MANY businessmen claim that the chief obstacle to more U.S.-Soviet trade is the Jackson amendment tying lower tariffs to freer emigration. But even if the USSR were granted most-favored-nation tariffs, Soviet exports to the U.S. would still not increase significantly (which means that its ability to import American goods would also not increase by very much). Even now, the great bulk of Soviet exports consists of raw materials and semi-manufactured goods which are not subject to discriminatory tariffs. The only exports which would be affected if the Jackson amendment were withdrawn are manufactured goods, and there just is not very much of a market in the U.S. for Soviet products.

The congressional limitation on Export-Import Bank credits is far more important in this connection since the Soviet Union simply does not have the hard currency to finance its purchases. The amendment limiting credits, adopted in 1974 in the climate of growing disillusionment with détente, resulted in the U.S. government's with-

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drawal from a reckless economic venture, the financing of the huge Soviet-bloc debt. This debt was about $8 billion at the end of 1970. By the end of 1975, it had mushroomed to $38 billion, according to an estimate by the Chase Manhattan Bank, and by 1976, it had increased still further to $48 billion. Today it has reached $55 billion and is still growing. At a ministerial meeting of the OECD in June 1976, Henry Kissinger described the debt surge as "sudden" and "striking" and went on to raise questions about its economic and political implications. Kissinger also voiced concern that the debtor countries had acquired substantial leverage over the creditor countries through the latter's fear of default.

The Soviet Union's lack of hard currency has led to another practice which also skews the trade relationship in its favor. This is the so-called compensation agreement whereby a Western firm builds a plant in a Communist country and supplies equipment and know-how in return for part of the plant's eventual output. Once again, the advantages of this arrangement to the Soviet Union and its satellites are considerable. They not only increase their production with Western financing and advanced machinery and technology, but are also given access to Western markets in the course of "repayment"—and all this without spending any hard currency. The advantages to Western firms are cheap, strike-free labor (which, however, means a loss of jobs in the West) and access to untapped sources of raw materials. At the same time, however, they risk substantial losses if the market is glutted at the time of repayment, which is what happened to Armand Hammer's Occidental Petroleum, for instance, in its $20-billion fertilizer deal with the USSR.

Furthermore, they have no protection against repayment in substandard products, or against market disruption if the Communists, seeking hard currency or market penetration, choose to dump goods in the West. Fiat, for example, had no idea that it was creating a trade rival when it built the Volga Auto Plant at Togliatti (since it was assumed that Soviet domestic needs would easily absorb the plant's production). But the Fiat-like Lada is being sold right now in Europe and Canada at well below the cost of production. Similarly, unions throughout Europe's depressed chemical industry have expressed alarm that the products of the massive petrochemical plants to be built with Western support at Tomsk and Tobolsk will one day flood the European market.

In addition to the problems of market disruption and job displacement, Western firms run the added risk—always present when dealing with Communist countries—that political relations may deteriorate before compensation has been received. In some agreements the payback period is twenty years, a longer time than "détente" (by any prudent estimate) can be expected to hold up. If the Russians, for whatever reasons, should decide to cancel the compensation agreement at any time during that period, it will not do a Western firm much good to know that its collateral consists of oil pipelines buried beneath the Siberian steppes, or industrial machinery installed in Tobolsk. The knowledge that their investments have made them hostages to political circumstances could well turn Western businessmen into fervent defenders of appeasement.

Among votaries of U.S.-Soviet trade, however, the idea that political relations might deteriorate even in the face of expanded trade is virtually ruled out, since it is taken as axiomatic that trade will strengthen the liberalizing, peaceful tendencies in the Soviet Union. This is an old notion. In 1922, British Prime Minister Lloyd George said that trade "will bring an end to the ferocity, the rapine, and the crudity of Bolshevism surer than any other method." In our own time it is widely believed that trade, in Daniel Yergin's words, "draws the Soviet Union into the community of advanced industrial nations." From this point of view, of course, trade with the Soviet Union is valuable even if it does entail certain economic disadvantages. But is there any evidence so far of this happy outcome?

The view that trade will lead to liberalization in Russia is partly based on the not illogical belief that exposure to the West will encourage the development of Western norms and values in the USSR. Unfortunately, the present Soviet leaders, like the Czars before them, are as mindful of this possibility as anyone else, which is why they take great care to shut out Western cultural influences even while helping themselves to Western products and technology. To realize how far the Soviet authorities are willing to go to prevent any contacts from taking place outside of very tightly controlled official channels, one need only think of the confiscation of follow-up cards passed out at a seminar in Moscow conducted by Singer personnel, or the removal of subscription forms from all copies of *Aviation Week and Space Technology* distributed at the Raytheon exhibition, or the totally self-contained office, hotel, and apartment complex for foreigners that is being constructed in Moscow—the modern equivalent of the *Nyemetskaya Sloboda*, or "foreigners' quarter" (literally, "German Quarter") built by Vassily III almost 500 years ago.

But the Soviet regime not only isolates Westerners, it also tightens internal controls to prevent Western influences from seeping through. Particularly during periods of détente—the last decade is a good example—there seems to be an increased tendency for the regime to step up repression and ideological vigilance. All of this would seem to suggest that trade does not promote liberalization, and may actually have the opposite effect.

The fact, too, that trade is used as a way to ob-

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tain the technology needed for rapid modernization means, in the context of a command economy, that it is frequently associated with forced industrialization and the use of slave labor. The program of Westernization under Peter the Great was achieved at the cost of immense sacrifice and suffering imposed on the Russian people. Two centuries later, Stalin's first Five-Year Plan, which marked another period of intense absorption of Western technology, took an even greater toll in freedom and human life.*

The argument is also made—again to show the link between trade and freedom—that the Soviet Union must liberalize its system in order to solve its economic problems, and that increased exposure to our superior economic methods will encourage Soviet leaders to take this course. This argument might be valid if the Soviet leaders were interested in nothing more than promoting economic efficiency and technological innovation. But they also have a stake in maintaining their totalitarian system, a system which is inherently inefficient and uncreative. If this fundamental contradiction were allowed to work itself out, it might conceivably lead to real reforms inside Russia, but Soviet leaders have been able to avoid the choice between reform and stagnation precisely by turning to the West for totalitarianism's "missing dynamic." (It is instructive to recall that Brezhnev's decision to import Western technology on a large scale followed a brief but politically costly experiment in the 60's with economic decentralization.)

Thus trade, by injecting into the Communist system the technological innovations without which it could not survive but which it cannot achieve on its own, actually helps to sustain totalitarianism.

The strategic as well as the moral implications of this fact have thus far been ignored. The idea that trade promotes East-West peace, central to the thinking of those who shaped the policy of détente, remains basically unchallenged among U.S. policy-makers today, despite evidence that the increase in trade since 1970 has not been accompanied by reduced Soviet military spending or greater moderation in the Middle East, Africa, or elsewhere. In fact, increased trade (or, more specifically, the increased pace of technology transfers) has been accompanied by the continuing build-up of Soviet military forces and by a greater Soviet readiness to intervene in local conflicts.

Pre-revolutionary Russian history offers numerous examples of the rulers of Russia importing technology from the West to strengthen their country's military capacity. And far from ending the practice of importing Western technology for military use, the Bolshevik rulers have simply recast it into revolutionary terms. Occasionally these acquisitions have been accomplished by theft—as in the case of the atomic espionage of the 40's—but more often the same result has been achieved through political and trade agreements, in accordance with Lenin's famous statement that the capitalists "will supply us with the materials and technology which . . . we need for our future victorious attacks upon our suppliers."

In the 20's Germany was the main foreign source of military assistance. Thereafter, the United States took over, becoming the main supplier of military-related technology, along with Germany and Britain, until the cold war. Fertilizer plants supplied by the West were used to produce explosives, machine plants turned out gun barrels, and—most important—the automotive industry which had been set up by U.S. firms produced tanks and armored trucks.† For years after World War II, Lend-Lease transfers and the dismantling of German industry were providing the Soviet Union with the foundation for military production.

THIS process is still going on today. Indeed, there is now a growing concern in the United States that the technology we have already supplied to the Soviet Union, particularly in the computer field, has contributed to Soviet advances in strategic weaponry and strengthened the USSR's overall economic and military capability. The president of Texas Instruments, J. Fred Bucy, who chaired the Defense Science Board Task Force on the Export of U.S. Technology, told a Senate panel in 1977 that "the transfer of militarily significant technology has been of major proportions," and that the full consequences of this development "will become evident over the next five years."

Presumably the U.S. government approves only technology transfers which have no military signif-

* The American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, whose board included representatives of the top American corporations doing business in Moscow, did what it could to whitewash the Soviet Union on charges of forced labor during this period. In a speech at the Bankers Club in New York in 1932, Colonel Hugh Cooper said that "The Chamber has made a real study of these charges. It has obtained signed statements from many leading American businessmen, who have actually been to Russia and have personally observed labor conditions there, and I am glad to say that not one of these men think labor in Russia is forced." Since American firms instructed their engineers not to discuss conditions in the USSR, only the apologists were heard from. Alcan Hirsch, who supervised the construction of the Du Pont nitric acid plant at Chernorechenski, claimed in his book, *Industrialized Russia* (1934), that while the Soviet Union had "not as yet reached unprecedented eminence in the arts, science, or industry, . . . sociologically it is far ahead of the rest of the world." With all the attention paid to intellectual fellow-traveling with Stalinism in the 30's, it appears that the subject of business complicity has been sorely overlooked.

† Much of this was known to American officials. In 1933, for example, the American engineer, Zara Witkin, who supervised construction of some of the "secret industry" plants in Russia (Eugene Lyons called this task "the most important given to any single foreign specialist"), told a U.S. Consul in Poland that every tractor plant "is of course a tank factory and an automobile plant [is] a factory which may at any time produce mobile artillery."

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icance, but the problem is that most modern technologies have both civilian and military uses. The air-traffic control system, for example, can also be used for air defense and vectoring fighter aircraft; the semiconductor technology used in computers has numerous military applications, including missile-guidance systems; technology for the manufacture of wide-body aircraft and high-bypass turbofan jet engines can be used in the production of military aircraft. And while precision ball bearings certainly have many industrial uses, they are also essential for the production of the guidance mechanism in MIRV warheads.

The problem is further complicated by the fact that the technologies of greatest interest to the Soviet Union are first developed by the private sector in the U.S. for commercial use, and are only later adapted to military programs. As Bucy pointed out, this means that "increased pressures for commercial trade with the USSR and its Comecon partners may result in the flow of significant technologies before similar technologies are applied to advanced weapon systems in the U.S."

To add to the problem, many Soviet factories have both civilian and military lines of production. It would be most surprising, for example, if the Western-built Kama River truck factory, which is slated to be the largest industrial complex in the world, did not produce military vehicles upon its completion, in addition to diesel trucks and engines. This has been standard procedure in Soviet motor plants for some time, and, given the regime's obsessive secrecy—which is not, after all, a psychological aberration but has a rational purpose—it will be impossible to verify whether or not the Kama plant is producing for the military. Indeed, when one considers for a moment that military production is the first priority of the centralized Soviet economy, and that it is the sector in which the best available technological and human resources are concentrated, the notion that imported Western technology will *not* be used for military purposes seems rather farfetched.

Nor need this technology be directly used by the military in order for it to be "militarily significant." Even if applied to industry, it serves the purpose of freeing scarce research talent for military work. It seems perfectly obvious that if foreign technology relieves the labor shortage by modernizing Soviet industry, it makes it easier for Moscow to maintain a standing army of 4 million men. And if this modernization is financed with Western credits, it reduces the burden of a military budget that now consumes somewhere between 11 and 15 per cent of the Soviet GNP.

An example of how technological transfers to Russia of great strategic importance can take place with the approval of the U.S. government is provided by the recent controversial sale by Dresser Industries of a $144-million turnkey plant for the manufacture of deep-well drilling equipment. This particular deep-well technology is needed by the Soviet Union if it is to develop major new oil reserves, an urgent priority since it is now expected to become a net importer of oil by the mid-1980's. Lacking adequate energy sources, the Soviet economy's growth rate could slow to about 3 per cent, which would make it exceedingly difficult for Moscow to continue to increase military spending by 4 to 5 per cent every year, or to finance Cuban expeditions to Africa. Hence the Soviet interest in American oil technology.

Nevertheless, last summer, only weeks after President Carter announced that the government would assume control over all sales of oil technology and equipment to the Soviet Union, the administration approved the Dresser sale. Its reasoning, summed up by the Washington *Post* in an approving editorial, was that "the technology is widely available" outside the U.S., and that in view of the energy shortage "it serves American interests to get the maximum number of explorers into operation as soon as possible."

The administration appears to have given no consideration at all to the strategic significance of this sale, which greatly enhances the USSR's oil-production capabilities by giving it the capacity to manufacture premium rock-drill bits equal to the entire U.S. output, and greater than the Soviet Union's anticipated deep-well drilling requirements for the 1980's!

In the controversy surrounding the sale, attention was focused on only two items of the manufacturing equipment which were thought to have possible military application. These two items were subsequently approved by the Defense Department, despite expert opinion which held that one of them could produce armor-piercing projectiles. Senator Jackson, chairman of the Senate subcommittee which investigated the sale, cited pressure by both the Commerce Department and Dresser Industries as a factor that "may have contributed to what appears to have been a less than thorough assessment of national-security questions."

Following protests by Energy Secretary Schlesinger and members of the National Security Council, approval of the sale was suspended pending a review by a special task force of the Defense Science Board. The task-force report concluded that the deep-well technology in question "has strong strategic value in its application to Soviet energy needs of the 1980's" and that it is "wholly concentrated in the U.S.," thus giving this country effective control over its export to the Soviet Union. The report also pointed out that the transfer of this technology to the Soviets would allow them "to enter world markets with advanced drilling capabilities," thereby enabling them to increase their presence and influence in the Middle East and other oil-producing areas of the world. On the

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question of the two supporting technologies which the Defense Department had previously approved, the report concluded that both would contribute significantly to the Soviet Union's military potential.

Despite these warnings, the President approved the Dresser sale a second time. Subsequently, he told a news conference that the administration takes adequate precautions "to be sure that we are not deliberately or inadvertently giving to [Communist] countries a means by which their military capability would be greatly escalated. This would be contrary to the existing law."

But what exactly did the President mean when he used the words "greatly escalated" here? The ambiguity of the formulation cannot be attributed only to the informal conditions prevailing at a news conference. It also serves to point up the fact that the United States does not at present have an effective or even coherent policy governing the export through commercial trade of strategic technology to the Soviet Union. The agency authorized to control commercial exports affecting national security is the Commerce Department, and since this department is interested primarily in promoting trade and reducing the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit, these considerations play a great part in influencing judgments on what is "militarily significant."

But the fundamental reason for the absence of a sound policy in this area is political. As long as it is assumed that trade promotes peace, no matter what is being traded, the problem of the flow of strategic technology to our principal adversary is not likely to be given serious consideration.

The argument heard most often—that controls cannot work since other nations will export what we embargo—is a rationalization for having no policy at all. In the Dresser case, for instance, there was no foreign producer the Russians could have turned to if we had denied the sale, but we approved it nonetheless. It is hard to see how the U.S. can expect to gain the cooperation of its allies in denying strategic technology to the Soviet Union if we ourselves continue to supply it in abundance. In fact, the relaxation of U.S. controls over the last decade is a major reason for the diminishing effectiveness of CoCom, the international body established in 1950 to regulate the export of strategic items to Communist nations.*

ONLY a rigorous control policy can be expected to shore up the faltering CoCom arrangement and win broad support in the U.S. The objective of such a policy need not be to restrict trade with the Soviet Union, but only to shut off the flow of strategic technology in accordance with the Defense Science Board's crucial distinction between products and technology —that is, between the item produced and the know-how required to produce it.

This distinction did not matter so much thirty years ago, when the U.S. and its CoCom allies first attempted to work out a control policy for trading with the Soviet Union. At that time a favorite Soviet method of acquiring technology was to copy Western prototypes which had been procured through single-item purchases. But as technology became more complex and the pace of technological change increased, this kind of "reverse engineering" became less feasible—by the time a process had been mastered and brought to production the product would have become obsolete. So the Russians naturally dropped their interest in individual products, and turned instead to the direct acquisition of critical technologies and production capability.

Control policies, however, have been oblivious to these changes and are still focused on the regulation of product transfers, so that items of secondary importance to the Soviet Union are now regulated while the U.S. and other Western countries actually encourage the transfer of what the Russians want most. We now have a policy, in other words, which allows Western firms to build whole production facilities in the Soviet Union, transfer vital manufacturing information, and train Soviet personnel, while withholding one particular item in the sale because it is on the CoCom list of embargoed goods. Small wonder that our allies are cynical about it.

It seems clear that this must change. While controls on selected critical products should be maintained, policy must be revised to take account of the central importance of technology transfers which contribute in any way at all to the Soviet Union's military and industrial strength. To be sure, in a world where technology is widely diffused, a policy aimed at denying the Soviet Union access to such technologies cannot be airtight. But as Fred Charles Iklé, the former director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, has observed, "gradual seepage is one thing. It is quite another matter to expedite the spillage of some of the most advanced and complex technologies." And even if Soviet acquisition of such technologies cannot be prevented, it can at least be delayed, which may serve to maintain and perhaps extend what is called "the strategic lead time" of the United States over the Soviet Union. Our present lead in strategic technologies, estimated at three to ten years, is smaller than it was before "détente," but it is still a factor that restores some stability to the growing imbalance between U.S. and Soviet military forces.

DESPITE the current avidity for trade, it should be possible to win at least a measure of business support for a policy of stricter

* CoCom's full name is the Coordinating Committee of the Consultative Group of Nations, and its membership consists of NATO nations (except Iceland) and Japan. It maintains a common list of embargoed strategic items.

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controls on technology transfers to the Soviet Union. In his new book, *A Time for Truth,* former Treasury Secretary William E. Simon traces the history of U.S. business aid to the Soviet Union by way of demonstrating the economic superiority of capitalism over Communism. But except in a footnoted afterthought in which he calls the whole enterprise "desperately unwise," Simon never comes to grips with the basic question of who stands to benefit most from current U.S.-Soviet trade ventures. Lenin put it rather succinctly in his famous question, *"kto kogo?"* ("Who [will defeat] whom?"), and perhaps it is time this question was asked by more than a small handful of business leaders. Capitalism is indeed more efficient than Communism, but if this very efficiency is used to sustain and fortify the enemies of free society, does this not, in the words of Seymour Martin Lipset, constitute "the ultimate failure of capitalism"?

But business need not even bother about such ultimate conclusions in order to support a policy of controls on the transfer of technology to the Soviet Union—it need only recognize its own economic self-interest. The transfer of production capability will dry up markets and create competitors far sooner than it will enhance trade or profits. All it takes is one firm—poorly managed, perhaps, and needing a Soviet deal to balance its books—to transfer the technology of an entire industry; surely this consideration should provide sufficient incentive for business to *demand* an effective policy of controls. Then, too, there is the question of the competitive disadvantage individual firms now face in negotiating with the Soviet state trading monopoly. Should not businessmen see the need for a central clearing house for U.S.-Soviet trade to offset this disadvantage?

A policy of control on technology transfers differs significantly from the so-called policy of "economic diplomacy" which has stirred up so much pointless controversy in recent months. The former would shut off technology transfers to the Soviet Union while the latter would offer technology as an incentive to moderation and deny it as punishment for hostile acts. But "economic diplomacy" is no substitute for a policy of military deterrence, and common sense should dictate that anything the Russians might want badly enough to forgo opportunities for expansion is probably something they should not have in the first place. A policy of controls, on the other hand, would not be tied to politics, but for reasons that should already be clear, it could in the long run limit the Soviet Union's ability to threaten the security of the West.

THE denial of foreign technology might very well succeed—where the present policy has failed—in bringing about a greater degree of decentralization and liberalization within the Soviet Union, but such a policy should not be aimed at changing the Soviet system. Nor should controls be loosened in response to favorable Soviet gestures on human rights. Technology is too valuable to be turned into a pawn in a game which the Soviet Union could easily manipulate in its favor. (This criticism, incidentally, does not bear upon the Jackson amendment, which in any case does not offer technology in exchange for freer emigration but only a modest amount of hard currency in the form of credits and lower tariffs on Soviet imports. There is nothing wrong with buying people's freedom, which is what the Jackson amendment amounts to. On the contrary, it is an objective worthy of a democratic society.)

It is difficult to speculate on future trends inside the Soviet Union and more difficult to influence them from the outside. If we have learned anything at this late date in our relations with the USSR it is that interaction with the West does not necessarily yield helpful results, and that the rich creations of a free system become distorted when absorbed by a system that is not free. Those who wish to build bridges to the East through trade might recall that Brezhnev, on the eve of détente, observed that "scientific-technical progress has now become one of the main bridgeheads of the historical struggle of the two systems."

It would be ironic if the one system able to generate such progress lost the struggle because it lacked the wisdom to understand its advantage and the will to protect it.

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Zionism vs. Anti-Semitism

Jacob Katz

EVER since its emergence as a national movement, Zionism has had its ideological and political opponents. Within Jewry itself, opposition arose in the early days both from the Left—the socialists and Communists—and from the Right—the Orthodox. It is perhaps a sign of the times that when one speaks of anti-Zionism today, one is inclined rather to think of resistance and animosity from without. What internal resentment and criticism exist are directed more against particular features of Zionist activity and aspiration than against the phenomenon as a whole, and even such criticism falls silent when confronted with the expressions of absolute denial coming from outside. Thus, in 1975, when the out-and-out assault of the United Nations General Assembly against Zionism occurred, identifying it with racism, Jewry found itself discriminated against at its very core, and reacted by rallying as one around the beleaguered camp of the Zionists.

Recent events have turned the notions of anti-Zionist and anti-Semite into veritable synonyms. At the same time, they have raised the question of the possible historical relation between the national movement of the Jewish people and modern anti-Semitism, a relation which is more complex than a superficial acquaintance with either phenomenon would suggest.

IT IS a truism, and one which the founders of Zionism were themselves quick to acknowledge, that the Zionist political program was connected in some way with the prevalence of anti-Semitism in Europe in the late 19th century. Did not Theodor Herzl evolve his Zionist program under the impact of the Dreyfus affair, the drama which he observed as an eyewitness in Paris in the mid-1890's? Did not Leo Pinsker write his Zionist pamphlet, *Auto-Emancipation*, in reaction to the bloody pogroms of Russia in 1881? Indeed, two staple arguments of early Zionists in favor of their ideological and political programs were the reluctance of Western societies to accept even emancipated Jews as equals and, in the East, the forestalling of emancipation by the Russian pogroms. And if, on the one hand, the founders of Zionism acknowledged the link between their political program and European anti-Semitism, external opponents of Zionism, on the other hand, often used this same connection as an ideological weapon to discredit the movement. Zionism was represented by its detractors as a mere reflection of anti-Semitism, and, as such, devoid of any deeper historical or spiritual significance.

But how important *was* the factor of anti-Semitism in the development of Zionism, and how important does it remain today? What *is* the precise relation between these two phenomena? At times, indeed, the conceptual framework of the two trends has seemed so intimately connected as to be almost identical. Thus, if there is one notion central to anti-Semitism in most of its ideological variants, it is the notion of race or its synonym, blood, employed as a means both of designating and of deprecating the Jews. Now, many Zionist thinkers, from Moses Hess to Martin Buber, used these same terms in delineating the boundaries of Jewish national existence. Did they then adopt the terminology of their enemies? In the case of Martin Buber, who began his Zionist activities toward the close of the 19th century, it is theoretically possible that such a process could have taken place. Moses Hess, however, wrote his *Rome and Jerusalem* in 1862, almost two decades before either Zionism or modern anti-Semitism appeared on the scene. This suggests that, whatever the parallels between the two phenomena, each had its own independent roots in the past.

Such, indeed, was the case. Hess himself, in Zionist historiography, is designated a "forerunner" of Zionism. The term indicates that although Zionism did not achieve the characteristics of a full-blown movement until the 1880's or perhaps even the 90's, it had a preparatory stage, a kind of subterranean preexistence, that preceded the movement proper by decades. And the same is true of modern anti-Semitism. The very term anti-Semitism—which was a creation of Wilhelm Marr—emerged only in the fall of 1879, coinciding with the eruption of the movement connected with the names of Adolf Stocker and Henrich von Treitschke. Yet the movement did not drop from

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heaven: it too had its forerunners, in Bruno Bauer and Richard Wagner in Germany; Adolph Toussenell in France; and Sebastian Brunner in Austria—to mention only a few. These figures were celebrated by later anti-Semites as early recognizers of the anti-Semitic "truth"—much in the same way as the Zionists of later days identified Hess and others as ideological anticipators.

To zero in on the actual source of the obvious parallelism between anti-Semitic and Zionist ideas we have to operate from the broader historical perspective. Both anti-Semitism and Zionism appeared against a background of ideological confusion into which Jewish existence had been thrown by the abandonment of the old theological definition of Judaism and the Jewish people. Both the Jewish and the Christian traditions had once accounted for the Jewish Diaspora by seeing it as divinely sanctioned. To Christians, the Diaspora would be terminated by the absorption of the Jews into Gentile society upon their conversion at the end of the days; to Jews, it would be terminated through the ingathering of the Jews into their homeland with the coming of the Messiah. Once divested of these shielding interpretations by the growth of rationalism and historical criticism, Jewish existence turned into an enigma.

Jews at the end of the 18th century, and in most places even much later, retained the physical as well as the mental marks of a special collectivity, whose members, though dispersed over the whole of the Christian and Muslim world, were nonetheless linked together through apparent signs of affinity and solidarity. What they lacked was a plausible ideological justification for this state of affairs. Nor did this embarrassing situation contain any hint of the destiny yet awaiting the remnants of this ancient nation—unless one believed in the idea of emancipation.

Emancipation in its limited political or legal sense meant the granting of citizenship to the Jewish inhabitants of a country—a concession that the secular modern state, contrary to its Christian predecessor, was indeed capable of bestowing. Yet in a broader and deeper sense the idea of emancipation meant the attempt to put an end to the anomaly of Jewish existence, offering Jews of every country the chance to be absorbed into the local population.

WHETHER such a solution of the Jewish problem ever stood a chance of being implemented will always remain a matter of speculation. Had the Almighty inspired the rulers of all the countries where Jews lived to emancipate them exactly at the same time, they might indeed have been absorbed by the majority. Yet inasmuch as the granting of emancipation depended upon the phase of economic, political, and intellectual development a country had reached, the idea that it could have occurred simultaneously even in the European states alone is fantasy. It took some three generations from the time of the emancipation of the Jews of France, after the revolution, to the corresponding enfranchisement of German and Austro-Hungarian Jewry. And even before the emancipation of Russian Jewry was seriously contemplated, the reaction to emancipation had already made itself felt in Germany, France, and Austria-Hungary. With the rise of the anti-Semitic movement, the concept of emancipation as the ultimate solution of the Jewish problem was repudiated.

That such a solution was illusory is anyway apparent, at least in historical retrospect, from what was transpiring in the life of the Jewish community before anti-Semitism appeared on the scene. Even where the idea of emancipation had been hailed as the redeeming message of the day, internal as well as external forces were at work to block the absorption of Jews into non-Jewish society. The cohesion of Jews among themselves, supported as it was by their being concentrated in certain economic fields, by their religious nonconformity, as well as by some cultural factors, made them a conspicuous and puzzling phenomenon. Citizenship, whether actually achieved or merely ardently desired, seemed to create a new reality, giving the lie to the old idea of the Jews as a community in temporary exile or subject to divine degradation. Yet if the old patterns of thought were of no avail, new ones had to be invented to do justice to the prevailing conditions. Indeed, a good deal of thinking about Jews and Judaism in the course of the last two centuries, on the part of Jews, their friends, and their foes alike, has been motivated or controlled by the need to take account of this post-theological and post-emancipatory reality. And that is why the most bitter adversaries of Jews and Judaism seem at times to speak the same language as Jews deeply attached to their community and its cultural heritage, though the two have had absolutely conflicting intentions. It is the common object of their reflections which is mirrored in the thought processes of each.

Some strange parallelisms can be adduced to substantiate this thesis. One of the most severe critics of the Jewish aspiration to civic equality in the early 19th century was the Heidelberg theologian, Heinrich Eberhard Gottlob Paulus. Paulus followed closely the Jews' attempts to achieve their political objectives. He paid special attention to the struggle of Frankfurt Jewry to retain the civil rights which had been acquired during the French occupation of the city in the last decade of Napoleon's rule. He commented profusely on this matter as well as on the palpable political and cultural mutation which had taken place in German Jewry during his generation. A latitudinarian theologian, who reduced his own religion of Protestantism to some basic moral principles and a minimum of symbolically interpreted rituals, Paulus

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hailed the attempts of the early Jewish reformers to do the same within their own religion by transferring the Sabbath to Sunday and abolishing the dietary laws and circumcision—in short, by removing the signs of Jewish singularity which were thought to constitute an obstacle to civil equality and social acceptance.

Such tokens of Jewish flexibility notwithstanding, however, Paulus was angered by the obvious reluctance of the bulk of the Jewish community to go along with the suggested adaptations. In the wake of the revolution of 1830, when the Jewish question was on the agenda of the Baden parliament and the Jewish cause had found an articulate advocate in the person of Gabriel Riesser, Paulus joined the fray with his pamphlet, "The Jewish National Separation: Its Origin, Consequences, and the Means of its Correction." The thesis of the book, as indicated in the title, was that Jews were a nation apart, and would remain so as long as they were committed to their religion, whose basic intent and purpose were to preserve them in that condition. In a country that was not their own, therefore, Jews could not claim more than the bare protection of their lives and possessions. They might certainly not claim political equality.

The charge that the Jews were an unassimilable nation was a favorite of opponents of emancipation in France, Holland, Germany, and elsewhere. Yet Paulus gave it a particular slant. In contrast to others, he did not concentrate on such external expressions of Jewishness as social cohesion, professional one-sidedness, and the like. His basic argument was that the Jewish *religion*, by nature of its legal foundation and its claim to the allegiance of all those born of a Jewish mother, turned the Jews into a national body even when individuals failed to live up to all of its principles and demands. This, of course, is exactly what Jewish theologians had been saying since the Middle Ages, and so did modern Jewish nationalists who were religiously oriented. Reading Paulus, one thinks of Isaac Breuer, the leader of Agudat Israel, who, though a militant opponent of political Zionism, defined Judaism in legalistic terms as a nation bound to the constitution spelled out in Jewish law and transmitted through the channels of *halakhic* tradition.

Nationalism legalistically defined may have been an idiosyncracy of Paulus and Breuer, but a conception of the Jews as a nation on some other, possibly more secular, ground —the very core of Zionist ideology—seems to have been anticipated by all the opponents of Jewish emancipation. Arthur Schopenhauer, for instance, is to be counted among these, and indeed for that reason he has recently been styled a forerunner of Theodor Herzl. Another and a most surprising instance centers on a hitherto unknown intellectual encounter which took place between Moses Hess and Bruno Bauer.

Bauer initiated his anti-Jewish career with his *Judenfrage* ("The Jewish Question," 1842). At the time he was a militant young Hegelian; he pursued his anti-Semitic course unabatedly, even after having turned staunchly conservative in the 1850's. Bauer thus served as a virtual bridge between the early anti-Semitism of the first half of the 19th century and the outbreak of the anti-Semitic movement proper in the 1880's. The encounter I am referring to occurred in the middle, with the appearance of Moses Hess's *Rome and Jerusalem*. This book is now recognized as an early Zionist classic. Theodor Herzl himself, who became acquainted with it after having developed his own Zionist project, called it a full-fledged anticipation of his ideas. At the time of its appearance, however, the book was a failure. It sold in the course of the first year no more than 160 copies. In Jewish quarters the book created quite a stir, but outside the Jewish pale it received only slight public attention. Hess's modern biographer, Edmund Silberner, collected some twenty references to it in the Jewish and non-Jewish press, most of the latter being short notices of little significance. But the most interesting review escaped his vigilance. It appeared in an unlikely place, the *Berliner Revue*, the organ of the extreme Prussian conservatives. The lengthy article, printed in two issues of the weekly, appeared anonymously, but the author was beyond all doubt Bruno Bauer, one of the major contributors to the *Revue*.

The gist of the review was this: the author of *Rome and Jerusalem* thinks he has made a great discovery in stating that the Jewish race represents a full-fledged nation with a particular spirit and destiny. Yet very soon he will have the opportunity to read the reviewer's *Das Judentum in der Fremde* ("Jewry Abroad"), and realize that others before him have been aware of this state of affairs. Obviously, Bauer glossed over the fact that his own presentation of Jews as a race and a nation carried with it overtones of animosity and contempt, while that of Moses Hess was geared to a positive reevaluation of Jewish national abilities and the prospect of their revitalization. For Hess this meant the reestablishment of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine. Bauer, on the other hand, denied the Jews' ability to maintain their own state. They were a nation, but one doomed to live in everlasting exile at the expense of other nations. Still, despite their conflicting visions of the future, the fact remains that Bauer, the anti-Semite, regarded his conception of Judaism as identical with that of Moses Hess, the Zionist.

Like Bruno Bauer, Richard Wagner too evolved his anti-Jewish theory decades before the outbreak of anti-Semitism proper. Wagner's *Judentum in der Musik* ("Jews in Music"), published anonymously after the 1848-49 revolution, and republished

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under his full name in 1869, rightly ranks as an anti-Semitic classic, and has been used as effective propaganda by all subsequent generations of anti-Semites. Though specifically aimed at discrediting Wagner's contemporaries and competitors, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and Giacomo Meyerbeer, the book is sustained by vituperative generalizations on the alleged deficiencies of the Jewish character and spirit. Yet beneath the vitriol is a layer of astute observation on the process of Jewish cultural assimilation. According to Wagner, Jewish artists, by severing themselves from their own popular cultural tradition, have relinquished the source of inspiration for creative activity. Since Jews are incapable of merging with the deeper layers of their surrounding society, and since their efforts at assimilation are directed exclusively toward the culturally barren middle class, Jewish artists find themselves in a vacuum. To anybody acquainted with the teachings of Ahad Ha'am, these arguments must have a familiar ring; for that leading exponent of cultural Zionism expressed in almost identical terms his reservations about the attempts of the Jews to assimilate.

Finally, the very idea of a possible transplanting of the Jewish community to Palestine also turned up from time to time in the writings of the early anti-Semites. Usually the idea was brought up in a perfunctory fashion, but there is one example of a detailed proposal for founding a Jewish state in Palestine, presented by the central figure of Hungarian anti-Semitism, Gyozo Istoczy, to the Hungarian parliament in 1878. It was the time of the Berlin Congress, where the future of the Near East was among the subjects to be discussed. Istoczy formally requested that the Hungarian parliament resolve to support the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, should such a plan be recommended by the Berlin Congress. In enlarging upon the subject to show that such a plan would be appropriate as well as feasible, he pointed to the immense potentialities of a newly awakened Jewish nation, for whom the founding of its own state would be a highly desirable and expedient objective. Reading these passages in praise of the Jewish nation and the blessings of the future state, one would imagine oneself in the company not of one of the radical anti-Semites of the 19th century but of one of the great advocates of political Zionism.

But Istoczy's speech had only the façade of a Zionist oration. Very quickly he divulged his real intention in conjuring up the vision of a Jewish state in Palestine. Istoczy's speech made his listeners laugh—the idea of a Jewish state sounded to contemporaries like the figment of an excitable imagination. He then explained that what he meant to demonstrate was that although the Jews could have their own state if they really wanted one, so committed were they to the fancy of world domination that they preferred to invest their immense energy and power in conquering the commonwealths of others.

As with Istoczy, so with Wagner and Paulus. Wagner's analysis of the assimilationist state of mind did not evolve, as did that of Ahad Ha'am, in the service of a Jewish national renaissance, but rather had a purely negative intention, to substantiate the alleged artistic impotence of his Jewish competitors. Similarly with the application of the term "nation" by ideologues like Paulus or Schopenhauer; it was employed to obstruct the Jewish claim to be emancipated, and not, as in its Zionist counterpart, to stimulate the will of self-emancipation.

IN SPITE of these qualifications, however, there remains a historical connection between early anti-Semitic tendencies and the subsequent emergence of Jewish nationalism. Yet the connection is not to be sought on the level of ideological congruency, but on the level of historical reality. To elaborate, let me quote a passage from Schopenhauer, which occurs in the second part of his *Parerga and Paralipomena*, written in the late 1840's. The philosopher describes the Jewish race as one that has been "driven from its native land some two thousand years ago, and has ever since existed and wandered homeless," while other great nations of antiquity "entirely disappeared":

> And so even today . . . this John Lackland among the nations is to be found all over the globe, nowhere at home and nowhere a stranger. Moreover it asserts its nationality with unprecedented obstinacy and . . . it would also like to set foot somewhere and take root in order to arrive once more in a country, without which of course a people is like a ball floating in air. Till then it lives parasitically on other nations and their soil, but yet it is inspired with the liveliest patriotism for its own nation. . . . The rest of the Jews are the fatherland of the Jew . . . and no community on earth sticks so firmly together as does this.

On the basis of this characterization, Schopenhauer then protests the use of the term "confession" for Judaism, a term borrowed from the Christian church: "Jewish nation is the correct expression." And as the Jews are a nation, it would be absurd to concede them a share in the government or administration of any country, that is, to grant them full emancipation.

Here, the term "nation" is clearly applied in the service of politics: the denial of the Jews' claim to full emancipation. But does this mean that the premises on which the conclusion rests were unfounded, or that the description of Jewish characteristics had been pulled out of thin air? Schopenhauer's statement contains a description of Jewish collective behavior, an evaluation of the Jewish

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presence among the nations, and a hypothetical prognosis of future development. As to the designation of Jewish activity as parasitic, this is one of the most widely spread anti-Jewish stereotypes. It was probably introduced by J.G. Herder in the late 18th century, and was based upon the one-sidedness of Jewish occupational distribution and the widespread contempt among European intellectuals for the professions of trade, finance, and the like. Therein Schopenhauer simply followed the current trend of anti-Jewish opinion. The extraordinary degree of social cohesiveness and mutual solidarity of Jews, too, was often observed and commented upon, for the preservation of Jewish separateness ran counter to the expectation that with access to at least some social avenues the Jews would disperse and lose the character of a sub-society, a state within a state (as the slogan had it). It is a keen insight on the part of Schopenhauer into the nature of Jewish reality that in the long run this social cohesiveness would translate itself into a drive for political independence.

Most observers of Jewish cohesion stopped at the stage of criticism. They decried the manifestations of Jewish public life, the establishment of special Jewish institutions, Jewish scholarship, or a Jewish press, anything that went beyond the satisfaction of purely religious needs. All other symptoms of Jewishness, especially of Jewish cooperation on a larger than local level, were regarded as a virtual breach of the unwritten contract of assimilation-in-return-for-emancipation. Sometimes, indeed, the payment of the Jewish debt, in the currency of assimilation, was demanded even where formal emancipation was far from being complete.

An outstanding case in point is the suspicion that fell on the establishment of the Alliance Israelite Universelle in France in 1860. Admittedly, the founding of an organization with the declared purpose of furthering common Jewish interests on an international level was at variance with the expectation that world Jewry would dissolve itself into so many locally based religious communities. The founders of the Alliance themselves had to overcome their own misgivings on this score. Adversaries of Jewish public activity took the Alliance as proof positive of their contention that Jews were determined to maintain their international ties and to strive for their age-old sinister objectives. Scarcely another Jewish activity or phenomenon played such a conspicuous role in the thinking and imagination of anti-Semites all over Europe, among them prominently Gougenot des Mousseaux in France and Gyozo Istoczy in Hungary. The Alliance served to conjure up the phantom of the Jewish world conspiracy conducted from a secret center—later to become the focal theme of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Being of an imaginary, and at times even of a clinical, character, such fantasies nevertheless did not lack a point of reference in historical reality. The point of reference consisted of the token remnants of pre-emancipatory Jewish life and the visible expressions of collective Jewish activity. Both of these phenomena appeared redundant or supererogatory in the light of the officially accepted designation of Jewry as a religious confession, and it was this redundancy that caused Schopenhauer and others to opt for the expression, Jewish "nation." Whether this was justifiable according to some preconceived idea of what constituted a nation is of little importance. Most Jews, especially in the West, lacked at that time any consciousness of Jewish nationality, though a small minority, the forerunners of Zionism, were already at work cultivating and formulating it—a fact of which Schopenhauer could not possibly have been aware. Had he been acquainted with the Eastern European Jewry of Russia, Poland, and Rumania, he could have observed there the elements of a full-fledged Jewish nationalism emerging through the process of secularization that affected Jewish society without the experience of emancipation and assimilation. There the Jewish masses, living in close physical proximity, speaking their own language, and immersed in their popular culture, represented a veritable national minority. The crystallization of Jewish nationalism at times reached the level of literary and ideological expression, and was clearly in evidence decades before the anti-Semitic reaction set in in the shape of the bloody pogroms of the 1880's. Of all of this Schopenhauer was of course ignorant. To his unfriendly but perceptive eye, it was sufficient to observe Jewish cohesion and solidarity in the West to speak of a Jewish nation and a Jewish nationality.

THIS leads us to an important point concerning the relationship between anti-Semitism and the Jewish national movement. It was not the emergence of the former that provoked the emergence of the latter by way of reaction. Rather, modern anti-Semitism was itself a reaction to Jewish proto-nationalism, to the incapacity and unwillingness of Jewry to divest itself of all the characteristics of national life except that of religion. True, once anti-Semitism—until then a mere undercurrent—erupted as a full-fledged movement in the 1870's and 80's, it gave a tremendous push to Jewish national aspirations. Yet this was already the second phase of a dialectical process. The starting point of the process was not anti-Semitism, but the perseverance of Jewish qualities.

There was no need for Zionism to deny that it shared a common historical ambience with anti-Semitism. Indeed, in the course of their twin histories up to the present day it has looked at times as if they might not only be reacting to one another but be capable of evolving identical objectives and

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even cooperating in their realization. Theodor Herzl, for one, hoped to reach an understanding with anti-Semites, who, he imagined, would appreciate his attempt to solve the Jewish problem. Ivan von Simonyi, Istoczy's colleague in the Hungarian parliament, in fact approached Herzl upon the publication of the latter's *Judenstaat* ("The Jewish State"), expressing sympathy for Herzl's scheme. Practical support later seemed forthcoming from the Czarist government, and Herzl had no hesitation in negotiating with the minister Viacheslav von Plehve, who was held responsible by Jewish public opinion not only for a series of anti-Jewish measures but even for the bloody Kishinev pogrom of 1903, a few months before Herzl came to see him in St. Petersburg. A similar attitude was later displayed by Vladimir Jabotinsky, who in the 1930's sought the support of the anti-Semitic government of Poland for the planned "evacuation" of Jews to Palestine.

Such contacts between the representatives of the two movements remained the exception. During the course of its venturesome history, Zionism received moral and material support from various non-Jewish quarters, but none from anti-Semites. These as a rule conceived of Zionism as no more than another variation of the perennial Jewish conspiracy against the Gentile world, an evaluation that arose out of the very nature of anti-Semitism. For the actual difficulty of coping with the Jewish presence within Gentile society was only one reason, and not the deepest one, for its virulence. Behind the rational arguments lurked the historically conditioned image of Jews and Judaism. Indeed, the more articulate and radical anti-Semites, like Bruno Bauer and Eugen Duehring, denied even the possibility or the desirability of a Jewish state, the former because of the alleged incapacity of Jews to live except as parasites, the latter because he regarded Jews as a particularly pernicious species that ought not to be tolerated anywhere, under any circumstances.

It was because of his unqualified denial of the right of Jewish existence that Duehring was retrospectively recognized as a kind of ideological precursor to Hitler. The Nazis, too, toyed with the idea of establishing a separate Jewish province or protectorate in Eastern Europe or in Madagascar, but even if established, it would have been a mere stopover on the way to the planned Final Solution. For according to the more radical version of anti-Semitism spelled out consistently in Nazi ideology, there was no room for Jews anywhere on earth, whether spread among the nations or concentrated among themselves.

THEODOR HERZL's vision of liberating Jews and Gentiles alike from the curse of anti-Semitism can be said to have erred on two counts. First, he identified the ingathering of Jews in their homeland with the elimination of the Diaspora, assuming that with the establishment of a state, Jews would either join it or disappear in their social surroundings. Second, he attributed anti-Semitism exclusively to the actual strain suffered by Jews and Gentiles when living in social symbiosis; he ignored the historical roots of anti-Semitism, which were in need only of the slightest stimulation to begin anew their poisonous growth.

It has been the paradoxical result of the Zionist endeavor that instead of removing the external stimulus to anti-Semitism—namely, the social entanglement of Jews in non-Jewish society—it has added a new dimension to it. The Jewish state, being the outgrowth of the perennial Jewish predicament—the retention by Jews of their national existence without the possession of its physical basis—is beset by many of the same problems and perplexities. Thus, the clash between Israel and its neighbors is not simply one of conflicting political interests. At stake also is the issue of the definition of Jews as a nation. Not unexpectedly, perhaps, the positions are now reversed, with Israelis claiming for themselves the status of a nation, characterized by historical ties to a country, while their opponents deny it to them. Arab propaganda has also shown itself ready to adopt ideological weapons that include stereotypes of Christian background, from the arsenal of traditional anti-Semitism. The most discredited anti-Jewish writings of Europe, such as the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion,* have been widely disseminated, read, and believed in the Arabic-speaking countries.

The post-Zionist variation of anti-Semitism is hardly restricted to Arabs. Since the partial realization of the Zionist project left most of the Diaspora communities intact, social friction between Jews and Gentiles remained endemic to the Jewish situation. Moreover, since the Jewish state has become a subject of international debate, and since Jews everywhere are inevitably associated with its fate, a new occasion for possible friction has been added. There is no anti-Semitic movement of intensity in evidence anywhere today, but occasional outbursts in the West and a steady pressure by Russia and other Communist countries are intimately linked with the real or putative allegiance of Jews to the Jewish state. The charge of divided or dual loyalty, which is of course of long standing—in fact, it is but a variant of the accusation of Jewish international cohesion—has now received some semblance of substantiality.

If Zionism has failed to eliminate the determining factors of anti-Semitism, it nevertheless has succeeded in changing the climate within which anti-Semitism operates. As the proverbial Jewish passivity has given way to active self-defense—sometimes called excessive or overactive—the traditional image of the Jews has undergone a transformation. Similarly, the reconstruction of a full-fledged Jewish society has given the lie to the no-

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tion of an inherent Jewish parasitism. If it had had the opportunity to exercise its full potential, the Zionist enterprise might well have undercut anti-Semitism altogether—not so much through a change in the Jewish situation as through a rehabilitation of the Jewish character and mentality. As things stand, the rehabilitating effect of Zionism is balanced by the continuing controversy not only over the acts and deeds of the Jewish state but over its very right to exist. The passion with which this issue is debated even in circles uninvolved in the problem makes it clear that the stand taken by people on this question for better or worse is strongly influenced by their attitude toward Jews and Judaism. Thus in our day the anti-Semitic tradition has found new sources to thrive on and new subterfuges with which to cover itself.

In view of all this, one may say that in the struggle of the Jewish state for a peaceful and tranquil existence, the fate of anti-Semitism too hangs in the balance. The continual wrangling over Israel is apt to keep alive and even to exacerbate anti-Jewish sentiment, while a catastrophic termination of the struggle would throw world Jewry back into a condition of pre-Zionist deprivation, and worse. By contrast, a comparatively tranquil resolution would alone hold out the hope of the gradual receding of the perennial tension between Jews and Gentiles. Whether the realization of this hope is to be granted us is the fateful question hovering over Jewish—and in a sense also over Gentile—destiny.

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Europe—The Good News and the Bad

Michael Ledeen

WESTERN EUROPE has entered a period of intense political activity. With France and Germany pressing for the new European Monetary System; with Spain, Portugal, and Greece asking for entry into the Common Market; and with Great Britain on the edge of making a genuine commitment to Europe, one has the sensation of a possible great revival. Moreover, there are scattered signs on the continent of a dramatic resurgence of faith in democracy and a rejection of Leninist totalitarianism—something which might have been judged impossible just a few months ago. Countries like France and Italy, which last year had threatened to embark on perilous experiments with Communism, today appear more firmly rooted in the Western camp, while Spain continues its impressive transition from dictatorship to democracy.

At the same time that this mini-renaissance is taking place, however, the opposite tendency is also at work. If there has been a rediscovery of democracy in some quarters in Latin Europe, there are distinct signs in West Germany and elsewhere of a growing accommodation to Soviet power, especially Soviet military power. The broad social and political consequences of such an accommodation may be usefully characterized by the term "Finlandization."

Upon closer examination, these apparently divergent tendencies in Western Europe suggest some common causes, and raise some basic issues for the future.

I

THE Western European campaign against totalitarianism, and the accompanying rejection of Marxism and its related doctrines, began a few years ago with the French "new philosophers." Led by veterans of the generation of 1968, including many who had manned the barricades in the Latin Quarter, the active opposition to the leftist myths of the 60's and early 70's has gained considerably in France—and to a lesser extent in Italy. This can be seen politically in the growing electoral strength of the Center and Center-Left parties (and the parallel erosion of Communist popular support), and it can be seen culturally in the debate among French intellectuals over the nature of Communism—a debate which has now reached historic proportions.

For many French intellectuals the debate centers on developments in Southeast Asia following the American withdrawal from Vietnam. Jean Lacouture, one of the most formidable practitioners of left-wing journalism in the last twenty years, may be taken as emblematic of the reappraisal now in progress. The author of some ten books on the Third World, Lacouture wrote innumerable articles on the Vietnam conflict for *Le Monde* and *Nouvel Observateur* in which he took a stridently anti-American and pro-Vietcong position; he was, indeed, responsible to a significant degree for the ideas held about Vietnam both by French intellectuals and—through the translation of his articles into English and their publication here—by many American intellectuals as well. Yet Lacouture has now published a book about subsequent developments in Vietnam and Cambodia in which he admits his "shame for having contributed . . . to the installation of one of the most oppressive regimes history has ever known." Indeed, Lacouture does not stop with a mere confession of sins; he calls into questions an entire class of left-wing intellectuals and journalists who distorted the truth, withheld information, and lied to their readers. In an interview with François Fejto in Milan's *Il Giornale Nuovo*, Lacouture acknowledged that:

> With regard to Vietnam, my behavior was sometimes more that of a militant than of a journalist. I dissimulated certain defects of [North] Vietnam at war against the Americans, because I believed that the cause of the [North] Vietnamese was good and just enough so that I should not expose their errors. . . . I believed it was not opportune to expose the Stalinist nature of the [North] Vietnamese regime in 1972, right at the time when Nixon was bombing Hanoi. But if we reexamine the dossier, it is true that I did not tell all that I knew about Vietnam.

Lacouture calls people like himself "vehicles and intermediaries for a lying and criminal propaganda, ingenuous spokesmen for tyranny in the name of liberty," and maintains that French intel-

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lectuals have still not come to terms with the true nature of their behavior. *Le Monde*, for example, now describes the Vietnam regime as an inhuman tyranny, but this prestigious journal has still not admitted it was wrong about Vietnam for nearly two decades. "The newspaper," Lacouture says, "has changed its mind but no journalist admits having misjudged things."

It is perhaps too much to ask of the French Left that it embark on a thoroughgoing critical examination of its own hypocrisy. But what critical examination there has been is significant enough. In Fejto's words, the phenomenon goes beyond the cases of Vietnam and Cambodia "and touches those fundamental attitudes which for such a long time favored the cynical exploitation of generous instincts and impulses by forces which had about them nothing of the generous or humanitarian." In short, there is a growing recognition of the double-think which has all too often been used to justify tyrannies of the Left as "progressive."

The same process of what might, at least by extension, be called de-Stalinization can be seen in the debate over freedom in the Third World which ran last summer in *Nouvel Observateur* (the semi-official weekly of the French Socialist party). The central theme was stated by a regular columnist, Jacques Julliard, who observed that while the European Left has by now abandoned the illusion that the struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States in Western Europe is a struggle between good and evil, this myth remains in force when it comes to the Third World. As the Soviet Union, which is the "locus *par excellence* of lies and oppression," has moved in to help African countries emerging from colonialism, it has managed to pass itself off as the genuine friend of the Third World, and many French leftists have convinced themselves of the "progressive" nature of Soviet assistance. "Unfortunately, since the installation of socialism in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Guinea, we know the result. There is no African socialism that is not totalitarian." For Julliard, this should mark the end of a monumental self-deception on the part of the European Left. The time has come, he writes, to invoke the criterion of human rights to distinguish between those societies of which one can approve and those which must be condemned. Left and Right no longer provide any meaningful guidelines; the touchstone must be human freedom. Gulags are Gulags, whether in Siberia or Santiago, and tyrants are tyrants, whether in Moscow, Seoul, or Peking.

It may justly be said that all this amounts merely to what the Italians call "the discovery of the umbrella." The tyrannical nature of much of what passes for "progressive" or "socialist" has been obvious for some time. But for men like Julliard and Lacouture, and for publications like *Nouvel Observateur* and *Le Monde*, which not only served for years as the leading edge of French intellectual support for Communist regimes in the Third World but also had a hand in the movement that narrowly missed bringing the French Communist party (PCF) into the government last spring, it is a very big change indeed.

The rediscovery of liberty by the non-Communist part of the French Left has gone hand in hand with a rejection of non-Western models of "socialism." In an article provocatively entitled "A Plea for an Adult Socialism" in *Nouvel Observateur* last October, Leo Hamon urged his Socialist-party comrades to abandon the messianic illusions of the recent past and adopt social democracy as their program. For the moment at least, the old inferiority complex of French Socialists vis-à-vis the PCF has given way to a vigorous assertion of Western values. In the wake of the electoral debacle, the Socialist party has actually been strengthened, while the Communists are slipping further and are racked by internal turmoil. And, as is generally the case in such matters, there has been a spillover across the Alps into Italy.

BEFORE they took place, the French elections of last spring were widely viewed as the possible beginning of a great wave of success for European Communist parties. Were the Union of the Left to win in France, it was argued, the Italian Communist party (PCI) would be propelled into the government shortly thereafter, and the prospects for the Spanish Communists would also be greatly improved. Instead, last spring marked a most difficult period for Communism on the continent. Not only did the Union of the Left lose, but its defeat was clearly the result of PCF provocations. Moreover, this Communist-induced setback in France occurred barely a week after the sensational kidnapping of Aldo Moro in Rome; in May, after the former Prime Minister was found murdered by the Red Brigades, local elections in Italy registered the most serious losses for the PCI in nearly thirty years.

The political preconditions for the entry of the Communists into the Italian government no longer exist. Whereas less than a year ago the Communists could plausibly argue that their popular support was growing relentlessly, today they are trying to find ways to contain their losses. Any attempt to bring the party into the government would provoke a grave reaction from a wide spectrum of the electorate.

The lessons of France have not been wasted on the Italian Socialist party (PSI). Under the new leadership of Bettino Craxi, who harbors distinctly hostile sentiments toward the Communists, the PSI, moribund for the past decade, has shown some signs of life. For the moment, Craxi appears the most aggressive and imaginative major party leader in the country. While it may be difficult to generate much enthusiasm for a party that has regularly disappointed its supporters ever since World War I, there is some hope that the PSI has finally made a decision about its historic role, and is ready to act on it.

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The political atmosphere in Italy has now changed to the point where the tiny but influential Republican party (whose most prominent spokesman, Ugo La Malfa, wrote a wildly pro-Communist article for *Foreign Affairs* last year) has not only expressed its disappointment over the PCI's tough Leninist stance and pro-Soviet line, but has even attacked the Communists for their consistently anti-Israel bias:

> In constantly following the foreign policy line of the Soviet Union, the Western European Communist parties have embraced the theses of Moscow on the Middle East. But the anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist themes in Soviet propaganda and the Soviet press translate themselves into pure and simple anti-Semitism. The Western European parties do not go quite that far, but neither do they manage to stop short of the dividing line. . . . The efforts of the Communist press to distinguish between an anti-Israel position and an anti-Jewish one are so inadequate that they can hardly be understood by the average reader.

Hand in hand with the discovery that the PCI is not a Western, democratic party like other parties has come the spectacular stroke of the election of Pope John Paul II, a man who symbolizes the triumph of Catholicism over Communism in Poland. As an Italian commentator wrote, one now has the ironic spectacle of a Communist mayor of Rome who knows nothing about real Communism, face to face with a vicar of Rome who knows everything about it.

Finally there is the miracle of Spain, which in three years has passed from dictatorship to democracy in a way no one believed possible at the time of Franco's death in 1975. And the Spanish have done it on their own: no emergency economic aid of the sort offered every other European country emerging from the shadow of fascism (whether via the Marshall Plan or the kind of special assistance Portugal has received); no special diplomatic favors (indeed, there has been considerable hostility to Spain's request to enter the Common Market); and certainly no special attention from the United States, despite the critical geopolitical importance of Spain. There appears to be a fairly solid consensus at the center of Spanish politics, favoring the formation of Center-Left and Center-Right governments for the foreseeable future. Here, as elsewhere, there is a general agreement to stick to the dull but civilized rules of parliamentary politics.

II

Yet these tendencies in France, Spain, and (to a lesser degree) Italy must be seen in the perspective of several trends in the opposite direction which, if they continue, may seriously imperil the democratic revival.

In Italy, years of Communist influence in the media and in educational institutions have produced a broad-based shift away from Western beliefs and toward a romantic Third-Worldism. In late November, for example, a national conference of "solidarity with the peoples of Southern Africa" was held in the Communist stronghold of Reggio Emilia. Sponsored by the Communists, the conference culled participants and supporters from nearly every leading political party and trade union in the country. Sandro Pertini, the Socialist President of the Republic, sent in a message of support, and speeches endorsing the radical "liberation" movements in Southern Africa came from representatives of the PCI, the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, and even the Under Secretary of State. The breadth of support was notable, since the tone of the conference was in line with just the sort of thing that Jean Lacouture now deplores so intensely in France. That the most prestigious representatives of virtually every political party in Italy were eager to participate shows how far they have traveled along the path away from the traditions of the Atlantic alliance.

If Italy is one example of the contradictory tendencies at work in Europe today—toward a revived perception of the importance of Western traditions on the one hand and toward an acquiescence in widespread Communist influence on the other—the Federal Republic of Germany is a second example. At the same time that Chancellor Schmidt has taken the lead in urging a higher degree of European unity, others in his Social Democratic party (SPD) are speaking about the possibility of German neutrality. Last fall, a major scandal erupted in the Federal Republic when it was reported that Egon Bahr, the Secretary General of the SPD and one of Willy Brandt's closest collaborators, had held secret meetings in the Kremlin where he had spoken of the desirability of creating a neutral zone in Central Europe that would lead to the reunification of Germany and its withdrawal from NATO. Although vigorously denied by Bahr and Brandt, the reports were taken with sufficient seriousness in Washington to prompt Zbigniew Brzezinski to warn against tendencies of "auto-Finlandization" in Germany.

The Bahr plan was hardly news; an account of his thinking had been published in America as early as 1973, and the plan was apparently known to American experts some years before. But the timing of the report—at a moment when American strength was perceived to be dropping—was significant. The Germans know full well that their country is likely to be the first battleground of any future East-West conflict, and if they become convinced that the American nuclear umbrella is insufficient to deter the East, prudence would dictate that they make their peace with the Kremlin. Moreover, the Soviet Union has every reason to encourage those Germans who are willing to entertain the notion of a neutral Germany, by holding out the mirage of reunification as the prize.

Thus Bahr's own predilections (which are shared by many other influential members of the

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SPD) fit well with the accounts of his rumored meetings with Brezhnev. And to judge by events, Bahr's ideas are gaining ground in the Federal Republic. Schmidt himself is said to have taken great pains that the final text of his recent *Newsweek* interview with Arnaud de Borchgrave be free of any hostile references to the Soviet Union (while swinging hard at the United States), and the German government complained last fall and winter that future NATO maneuvers ought to be more restrained than in the past. While no one doubts the sincerity of Schmidt's commitment to NATO, or the depth of his Western attachment, the mounting rhythm of *Ostpolitik* cannot be denied. The Germans are keenly aware of the way the wind is blowing these days.

In addition, there is a strong nationalistic sentiment in the Federal Republic which in a sense makes the Bonn government hostage to East German demands. In the past, the Federal Republic has shown great willingness to aid East Germany by making large contributions to the DDR in return for the emigration of its citizens to the West (the price per East German has been calculated at between $30,000 and $50,000). Recently, an agreement was signed to open autobahn traffic between West Berlin and East Germany in exchange for several billion dollars of aid. All of this is carried out under the banner of *Ostpolitik*, and is rationalized by the hope of "Westernizing" East Germany. In practice, however, it dilutes German criticism of the East, makes German leaders reluctant to challenge the Russians, and encourages the Bahrs of the Federal Republic to push ahead with their schemes for the neutralization of Central Europe.

III

Few could have anticipated the surprising signs of vigor shown by the French intelligentsia, which only a few months ago was demanding the victory of the Union of the Left. Fewer still could have anticipated the revival of the Italian Socialist party, or the heartening democratic achievement of Spain. Yet by the same token few could have predicted the signs of Finlandization in West Germany. What has provoked this curiously contradictory sequence of developments?

Many West Europeans believe that the underlying factor is Washington. For more than three decades, the basic direction of Western policy—monetary or military—has come from the United States, and the Europeans have largely entrusted the defense of the West—from NATO to Japan—to American forces. Now all this is changing. The drastic reduction in the role of the United States in world affairs suggests that Europe had better start fending for itself. For some this means a newly strengthened commitment to democratic institutions and Western values; for others, it has meant an accommodation to the inevitable political triumph of the Soviet Union in Europe.

The relationship between the United States and Western Europe is a unique one, thanks to a common culture and a series of alliances. But it is also a part of America's global role, and as such it has been seriously affected by the global shift in favor of Soviet power. It is thus no accident that the most worrisome signs of Finlandization come from countries which border on the Iron Curtain, while countries more distant from Soviet military power are experiencing something of a democratic revival. If the United States were firm in its resolve and serious about its power, the former development would be a relatively minor concern while the latter could be expected to continue apace. But as things stand, one must wonder how long the rejuvenated forces of anti-totalitarianism can continue their encouraging activity. When the President announced in December that he had accepted Chinese terms for normalization, it suggested to many of our allies that yet another devaluation had occurred in American self-interest. While West Europeans well understood the advisability of normalizing relations with the People's Republic, they were baffled by the unilateral nature of the concessions. Following hard on cases of American quiescence in Africa and the Middle East, and on the uncertain quality of American support for the Shah, this merely added to the conviction that the United States was unreliable.

The very people who are spearheading the revival in Western Europe say that they are profoundly concerned by the lack of American leadership, even if this has ironically provided a useful stimulus to their own efforts. (In Africa, for instance, it was the Europeans, and especially the French, rather than the Americans, who moved to meet the threat in the Shaba province of Zaire; our own belated response was due in large part to European pressure and initiative.) Their task would be far easier, and the outcome more likely to be favorable, if the United States took the lead in asserting Western values and demonstrated an understanding of the processes already under way in their countries. In France, Italy, and Spain events have seemed to provide a major triumph for the Carter administration's human-rights campaign. The French intelligentsia has abandoned many of its most dangerous illusions; the Italian and French Communists have been checked and challenged on the basis of human rights; and Spain has shown that a country can successfully and peacefully pass from tyranny to democracy. Yet the American government has been unaccountably subdued about these developments. Its silence suggests to the democratic forces in Europe that the United States either does not understand what is going on, or does not care. Yet if we cannot assure the Europeans that we are with them, and that they can count on us for their security, they may eventually find themselves having to make their peace with the hangman.

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An Extraordinary Catholic Childhood

Saul Friedländer

I was born in Prague at the worst possible moment, four months before Hitler came to power. My father was a lawyer by training, and later became vice president of a large insurance company in Czechoslovakia. A bourgeois aesthete perched on the edge of a volcano, he foresaw nothing of what the future would bring. The personal *ex libris* pasted in all his books contained a piano, a score by Chopin, and a carpenter's square, all standing out against the Star of David that served as the background, the foundation, of all the rest—and yet in our family, Judaism as a religion had completely disappeared.

We observed none of the rules of life that Orthodoxy laid down, celebrated none of the holidays, respected none of the customs. I remember visiting a good many of the churches of Prague with Vlasta, my Czech governess, yet I have no memory at all of the Altneuschul, the famous synagogue said to be the oldest in Europe, or of the Jewish town hall with its clock marked with Hebrew letters and hands that turned counter-clockwise, or of the Jewish cemetery, as old and famous as the synagogue. Of all this heritage I remember nothing, except perhaps a few Yiddish words. In short, we were typical representatives of the assimilated Jewish bourgeoisie of Central Europe.

On March 12, 1939 it had become blindingly clear, even to my parents, that Hitler would occupy Czechoslovakia. We would have to leave—as soon as possible, and my parents mistakenly chose France as a refuge.

For two years we lived in the town of Néris-les Bains, near Vichy, in the Unoccupied Zone. I was placed first in one, then another, institution for Jewish children. On July 16, 1942, the great roundup began in Paris; nearly 13,000 foreign Jews, among them 4,000 children, were herded into the Vélodrôme d'Hiver for deportation to the East. Adolf Eichmann let it be known that beginning on July 20 there would be sufficient space for children in the convoys destined to leave for the East before the end of August. My parents, desperate, appealed to one of their benefactors, Madame M. de L., and it was decided that I would be enrolled in Saint-Béranger, a boarding school run by a Catholic sodality not far from Néris.

My mother, in her plea to Madame M. de L., wrote as follows:

> In my despair I am turning to you, for I have learned through my husband that you have taken pity on us and understood what was happening to us.
>
> We have succeeded, for the moment at least, in saving our boy . . . but I don't want to leave him where he is, for today one can no longer have any confidence in a Jewish institution.
>
> I beg you, dear Madame. to agree to look after our child and assure him your protection until the end of this terrible war. I don't know how he could best be safeguarded, but I have complete confidence in your goodness and your understanding.
>
> My husband's fate and my own are now in God's hands. If He wishes us to survive, we will see the end of this awful period. If we must disappear, we will at least have the happiness of knowing that our beloved child has been saved.
>
> The little one has plenty of clothes, underwear, and shoes, and there is also enough money for him. I will leave everything with you if you will have the great kindness to tell me yes.
>
> We can no longer exist legally. (*Legal können wir nicht mehr existieren*). . . .

The letter having been written on two pieces of paper of different sizes, in a hand that in places was not at all clear, my mother added at the end: "I beg you to excuse the appearance of this letter. My hands no longer obey me."

The Abbé Bonnet,* an old priest with closed-cropped white hair and enormous glasses concealing almost blind eyes, came to Néris to get me. This gentle, affectionate man was taking me off to an entirely new world, to the strictest Catholicism, to an almost royalist, ferociously pro-Pétain, anti-Semitic France, to the ladies of the sodality, who were going to save a soul but who were also taking serious risks because the soul they were saving was that of a Jewish child.

Saul Friedländer, who lives in Jerusalem, is the author of, among other works, *Pius XII and the Third Reich* and *Kurt Gerstein: The Ambiguity of Good*. The present piece has been adapted from Mr. Friedländer's forthcoming book, *When Memory Comes*, which Farrar, Straus & Giroux is bringing out next month. English translation by Helen R. Lane, copyright © 1979 by Farrar, Straus & Giroux, Inc.

* All the names associated with my stay in Montluçon and the Indre are fictitious.

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As I entered the portals of Saint-Béranger, I became someone else: Paul-Henri Ferland, an unequivocally Catholic name to which Marie was added at my baptism, so as to make it even more authentic, or perhaps because it was an invocation of the protection of the Virgin, the heavenly mother safe from torment, less vulnerable than the earthly mother whom at this very moment the whirlwind was already sweeping away.

An adult conversion may be a purely *pro forma* affair, and there were many such during the war, or it may be the result of a spiritual journey that ends in a decision freely made; nothing disappears, yet everything is transformed: the new identity then changes one's former existence into a prefiguration or a preparation. The rejection of the past that was forced upon me was neither a *pro forma* affair—for my father had promised not only to accept my conversion but to assure me a Catholic education if life later resumed its normal course—nor, of course, the result of a spiritual journey. The first ten years of my life, the memories of my childhood, were to disappear, for there was no possible synthesis between the person I had been and the one I was to become.

My father had written the following letter to be handed over to the directress:

> I am very happy to learn through Madame M. de L. that you are prepared to welcome my only son into your institution . . . and raise him in the Catholic faith.
>
> It is with gratitude that I consent to and formally authorize you to baptize him. My wife and I promise to continue your work along the lines that you have laid down, as soon as God's will and circumstances permit us to see to his education ourselves.

I understand my father's letter: in the same circumstance, in the face of the same drama, would not I too have written the same lines, given the same authorization, made the same promises? I never knew whether these promises had been explicitly demanded; this is not impossible. On this point my parents were at peace with themselves, for from this moment on they accepted one goal, one essential imperative: saving their child. And in the face of so much distress, I can only tell myself: happily, not for what became of me, but happily for them, no religious allegiance stood in their way and the step was taken without doubt and guilt coming to the fore. But what, I wonder, would a religious Jew have done if confronted with such a terrible dilemma?

The day after my arrival the directress, Madame Dutour, gravely received me: "Your parents, my dear boy, have turned you over to us. You are going to have to work hard and learn your catechism quickly so that Jesus may count you one of his own. Here is a sheet of paper with the Our Father and the Hail Mary written out on it; you are to recite them to me tomorrow. Madame Chapuis will prepare you for your baptism and set the hours for your lessons. So go see her right away and remember to learn your prayers."

Saint-Béranger educated its pupils in a Catholicism that was particularly strict, even for the time, and did everything possible to encourage priestly vocations. The first days in this strange new setting left me with a memory of complete despair.

As I was still only a little pagan, my contacts with the other children at the beginning were extremely restricted. It was considered better to segregate me like this, out of prudence first of all, but also to shield me from the hostile attitude of some of my new comrades.

I had almost nothing to do except learn my catechism lessons, and as I did not yet have a place assigned me in study hall, I spent a good part of the day in the parlor, a little reception room that was almost always empty. I stood for hours behind the windowpane, looking out at the terrace, bordered with a few plants, and the dusty courtyard down below. One afternoon it rained: I found it a distraction, or rather, a relief.

Everything at Saint-Béranger stifled me: the austere discipline, the continual prayers of which I didn't understand a word, the dreariness of our dark building, and, finally, the food which seemed revolting to me. I don't know why, but I imagined that the rubbery meat that was served us on the day after my arrival was cat meat.

The "cat meat" and the general upset in my life had a pitiable effect on me, adding a grotesque touch to the overall picture that only accentuated my misery: on my second night at Saint-Béranger I was gripped by severe diarrhea and got up out of bed a good twenty times, as I remember. The next day everyone was put on a diet, for it seemed impossible that one child could have caused that much commotion. I forthwith acquired a dubious notoriety.

But what was happening to me was experienced through the filter of a single thought, a single desire, a single drive of my entire ten-year-old being: I had to rejoin my parents at any cost. It was more than distress or nostalgia: it was a physical need, so to speak, and nothing could stand in its way. My parents, at this time, still hoped to escape to Switzerland. My father's health, however, had gravely deteriorated, and they were now living in a hospital facility at Montluçon. I felt, with the inexplicable instinct of children, that if I couldn't manage to rejoin my father and mother before they left the hospital at Montluçon, this separation could be final.

I decided to run away.

Madame Chapuis taught me catechism at the caretaker's lodge, occupied by her brother. Hence I was able to inspect at my leisure the little front courtyard of Saint-Béranger and the gate that led to the street, but I was terrified by the personality of the brother, a Cerberus who was both lame and

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one-eyed. I was persuaded that this disabled man, who in reality was the gentlest and most harmless of creatures, had guessed my plans and would lay a trap for me at the last moment. I would wake up at night with a start, pursued by this cyclops's limping footsteps; during the lessons, the apostolic Roman Catholic church disappeared in a fog the moment the caretaker's blind eye was turned in my direction.

DESPITE my terror, on the first Sunday of my stay at Saint-Béranger, at the beginning of the afternoon, when everything was quieter than usual, I went and sat down on the bench in the front courtyard, as unobtrusively as possible, waiting for Chapuis to leave his lodge. He went out around three o'clock. I ran to the gate, opened it a crack, and found myself outside.

I had succeeded in making my escape, but where was the hospital where my parents were? A ten-year-old child finds his way by asking people. The passers-by whom I questioned may have been astonished to see such a little boy running about all alone like that, looking for a hospital. But could anything really have surprised them at that time?

At the hospital information window, I asked the way to my parents' room. I was told which one it was. Even today I am unable to understand why my parents were hiding there under their own name: can their assumed name have totally disappeared from my memory? But how would I have known it?

I climbed up four flights of stairs, opened the door, and threw myself into my mother's arms.

There are certain memories that cannot be shared, so great is the gap between the meaning they have for us and what others might see in them. Undoubtedly, the words exchanged in this hospital room were, objectively, simple, everyday ones: a child's pleas and adults' promises.

I was sitting on my mother's lap, with my arms around her neck, weeping. Everything was white in this room, the enameled whiteness of hospitals. There were several beds in the room but they were empty just then. The room opened out on to a balcony that ran the length of the building and allowed one to go from one room to another. That was how my father came in to join us.

The red splashes of pots of geraniums fastened to the edges of the balustrades contrasted with the overall whiteness. We had had geraniums on the windowsill in Néris too; it was my mother and I who took care of them. We watered them carefully and cautiously. When winter came, we had to make sure the frost didn't kill them, but what joy the moment the first flower opened in spring!

On this hospital balcony were chaises longues and a little table, also painted white, on which there was nothing but letter paper, an inkwell, and a fountain pen: no balls of yarn or knitting needles. In Néris, however, my mother used to knit in the evening. She had made me a pullover, a scarf, and mittens, for it was freezing cold in Néris in winter and all the children got chilblains. Since the end of the war, curiously enough, chilblains seem to have disappeared. I don't know how my mother had managed to come by the wool, but, in any event, the pullover she knit for me—and that I took to Montluçon—was white, with horizontal red stripes; the mittens also had colored stripes. My mother wanted everything to look pretty.

My father was paler than usual that day; he was unshaven and kept pacing endlessly back and forth. Though the weather was nice, he was wearing his woolen sweater for around the house, a light brown one with a thin blue stripe along the neckline. A doctor came in and went out on the balcony with my father. I saw my father shake his head; the doctor left and my father came back into the room.

I heard the continuous hum of voices in the corridor and along the balcony too, outside the neighboring rooms; visiting-hour. From time to time a burst of laughter. The light was already changing.

My father and mother spoke in turn. They answered me endlessly that we would not be separated for long. Meanwhile, it was absolutely necessary that I return to Saint-Béranger. No, I wouldn't be going with them: they couldn't tell me why, but it was better that way. I would soon be joining them. What was more, the war would be over shortly and we would go back to Prague; then everyone could—and here my mother used a rather vulgar Czech expression to lend the conversation a gay note, to prove to me that there was no reason, really absolutely no reason, for me to be unhappy.

I was quite aware, however, that there was anxiety in these words: my parents were pleading with all the conviction of those who know that they are not going to be believed. And at that point something happened that was a sign.

A phone call had been made to Saint-Béranger. Madame Chapuis and Madame Robert arrived soon afterward, if I remember rightly. I had to leave. My mother put her arms around me, but it was my father who unwittingly revealed to me the real meaning of our separation: he hugged me to him and kissed me. It was the first time that that timid father of mine had ever kissed me. Nothing was definite yet; others had risked taking their children with them. My parents had put me in a safe place, but here I was, a runaway who had gone straight back to them, unable to bear being separated. Could they drag me away from them a second time? I clung to the bars of the bed. How did my parents ever find the courage to make me loosen my hold without bursting into sobs in front of me?

It's all been swept away by catastrophe, and the passage of time. What my father and mother felt

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at that moment disappeared with them; what I felt has been lost forever, and of this heartbreak there remains only a vignette in my memory, the image of a child walking back down the rue de la Garde, in the opposite direction from the one taken shortly before, in a peaceful autumn light, between two nuns dressed in black.

FOLLOWING my return to Saint-Béranger, I made satisfactory progress in catechism, and at the beginning of October I was baptized in the Church of Notre-Dame in Montluçon. My first communion soon followed, as well as my departure for Montneuf in the Indre, another school run by the sodality. This school was in the country, and my father had hoped the pastoral setting would have a calming effect on me.

So, some time in the month of October, 1942, I passed through the great stone arch that led to the inner courtyard of my new refuge; beechnuts and chestnuts lay strewn along the paths all around.

I could not say what Montneuf had been before becoming a boarding school—a convent perhaps. But when I arrived, the building looked more like a big farm to me than a convent: everything about it was suited to rural living. As I think back on it today, I can't help remembering with a certain nostalgia the massive gray buildings, set about the vast, irregularly paved courtyard with the fountain in the center. And yet it was at Montneuf that I was more or less to touch the very bottom.

I was not a country child, and I felt more lost among the little peasants of Montneuf than among the young city dwellers of Montluçon. I would have liked to wander along the ponds, pick a flower, or gather chestnuts, but instead I was obliged to spade the garden, to rake, to do carpentry, and soon was to have to herd the cows—which frightened me more than all the rest. As Mademoiselle Cécile—whose father, she told us, was a fireman in Montauban who spent hours polishing his helmet—put it: "Paul-Henri, you're all thumbs!" My future was not at all a brilliant one according to her. This good young woman from the south of France, with her strong accent and her trace of a mustache, had no way of knowing how justified her pessimistic prognoses were.

"Paul-Henri." I couldn't get used to my new name. At home I had been called Pavel, or rather Pavliçek, the usual Czech diminutive, or else Gagl, not to mention a whole string of affectionate nicknames. Then from Paris to Néris I had become Paul, which for a child was something quite different. As Paul I didn't feel like Pavliçek any more, but Paul-Henri was worse still: I had crossed a line and was now on the other side. Paul could have been Czech and Jewish; Paul-Henri could be nothing but French and resolutely Catholic, and I was not yet naturally so. (What was more, that was not the last of the name-changes: I subsequently became Shaul on disembarking in Israel, and then Saul, a compromise between the Saül that French requires and the Paul that I had been. In short, it is impossible to know which name I am, and that in the final analysis seems to me sufficient expression of a real and profound confusion.)

I no longer remember whether I arrived at Montneuf just before or just after my tenth birthday, but it was at Montneuf that I received, through Madame M. de L., a letter that my parents had sent me for my birthday. They must have sent this letter before their departure from Montluçon; I don't know what has happened to it, but I remember it bore no sign of the place that it had been sent from, or of the place where my parents were at the time. They assured me that they were in good health and that I would soon be with them again; they also said everything that parents can say to their child for his tenth birthday—almost a man now, isn't that right? I was quite aware that there was something strained about this letter. Where were my parents? Were they afraid I might try to run away again? But I didn't have the strength to do it again. In fact, I was at the end of my rope.

I began to sleepwalk. To avoid being humiliated, I decided to tie myself to the rails of my bed in the evening. I made complicated knots around my left wrist, and even though the arrangement interfered with my sleep, it did keep me where I belonged. But in the morning a new problem presented itself. We were supposed to get ready for mass at a run, or almost. You can imagine the surprise of our dormitory mistress, Mademoiselle Madeleine I think it was, when she found that instead of washing his face like the others, poor Paul-Henri was struggling to untie himself from his bed. I had the choice between sleepwalking at night or being late to mass in the morning. I don't know what I did then, but as for all the rest, a serious crisis was soon to change the course of things entirely.

AT MASS, there were several of us who had the same difficulties. At the beginning, everything went well, but after about twenty minutes, through the combined effect of empty stomachs and incense, and the successive changes from a kneeling position to a standing one, one or the other of us would suddenly get up, leave the pew, walk down the main aisle of the chapel in the direction of the exit, and faint halfway there.

The victims were taken to the office of Madame Chancel, the directress, and when we came to, through the effect of ammonia or a renewal of strength quite natural at our age, we would often see her gaunt face leaning over us.

Madame Chancel's kindness ought to have been a source of comfort to me, but nothing seemed to be able to bring me out of the melancholic apathy into which I was sinking little by little. I did not react at all, for instance, even when a faintly comic

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episode occurred in this connection that to me was not at all comic.

One day I saw a boy of about fifteen arrive at Montneuf: Davy, a boy I had known in Néris. If there is such a thing as a Jewish face, his was one, there was no doubt of that, but his name had become much more French than mine even, a name with an aristocratic *de* in it. He turned up as an Eagle Scout, decked out in a magnificent uniform. He knew all about the most recent patriotic ceremonies and soon he began organizing the salute to the colors, campfires where he recited poems to the glory of Marshal Pétain, and walks punctuated with the most uplifting songs of the day; in short, Davy gave himself over to a feverish program of national revival. He passed through our midst like a hurricane, and during the few weeks that he stayed at Montneuf, he never gave a sign of recognizing me: he made not the slightest effort to be pals with me. I for my part restricted myself to following his lead in a daze: I too gave no sign that I had met him before.

It took me several months to go under entirely. One afternoon in November or December, we were walking on the edge of a wood, the sort of wood where everything grows together in a tangle —brambles, ferns, trees; the trees were almost bare and the whole formed a gray mass bristling with countless twigs. Opposite us, on the other side of the path, were fields the dark brown color of the soil, and, farther away, bordered by reeds, a pond reflecting the sky. The sky itself, covered with huge stretches of dark clouds, was transformed, just above our heads, into a band of intense color. This melancholy landscape was beautiful to me—to the point that I felt a thrill of pleasure. But despite these fleeting joys, I became sadder and sadder: in one way or another, I was going to let myself die.

Toward the end of the winter, in March, the occasion to do so presented itself. I had felt feverish for several days, but I was determined not to say a word about it. Mademoiselle Madeleine, who supervised our walks, was sometimes surprised at the apathetic air of poor Paul-Henri, but did not pursue the matter. And so we started out, as usual, on one of our outings. And as usual I loitered along a bit to the rear, all alone, for I hadn't been able to make friends with any of the children at Montneuf. The paths were real quagmires, and on the slopes the snow was still piled high in brownish drifts. I could barely lift my galoshes, my throat hurt worse and worse, and I seemed to be seeing everything through a sort of veil; I was burning with fever.

We walked alongside a brook. I fell even farther behind the group, which disappeared around a bend in the path. Without hesitating, I waded into the ice-cold water up to my knees; I knew exactly what I was doing, even though the fever dulled my senses. Suddenly Mademoiselle Madeleine appeared quite near me; I heard her questions, but her scolding seemed to me to be of no importance. Then came calls of "Paul-Henri, Paul-Henri" on every hand, but I couldn't have cared less about the cries, the laughter, the mocking looks of my schoolmates, who had retraced their steps.

I have no idea how the walk ended, for after I had been fished out of the brook I felt sick, and from that moment on my memories were confused, blending together into a single long stretch of being ill. I was in bed for several weeks; a very bad case of croup; according to Madame Chancel I nearly died. They didn't dare take me to the hospital, since in a little town like Le Blanc, or even a fair-sized city such as Châteauroux, a child who did not look at all like the others might have aroused suspicion. Madame Chancel installed herself near me, behind a screen, and a long bedside watch began.

At the end of three or four weeks of illness, my breathing was normal again and my fever began to go down. I was getting well.

I watched the life of Montneuf through the window of the infirmary that looked out on the big courtyard. I could see the wagon hitched to two horses, circle the fountain; I could follow the clumping of wooden shoes on the stones and the shifting sunlight on the wall of the building opposite; I could hear the children come out of mass, and could even make out the voice of Jean, a boy I liked. In short, in this month of April, 1943, I was coming alive again. Even good Madame Chancel was surprised at how quickly I was recovering.

Spring had come by the time I was allowed to go outdoors. In the beginning I had difficulty walking, but soon I could stroll along the edge of the ponds again. The path was bordered with hawthorn in flower and clumps of jonquils formed golden patches in the grass. I felt fine; I had changed. The memory of my parents seemed further away somehow.

During Holy Week I went back to my usual place in the chapel, without feeling faint this time, and began to assist at mass. More than once I was obliged to confess to "impure thoughts," but I became more pious than ever in order to turn over a new leaf. I was ripe for Saint-Béranger. In September I returned to Montluçon.

Once again it was Madame Dutour who welcomed me. She was exactly the opposite of Madame Chancel in appearance: whereas the latter was tall, pale, and frail, with a black mantilla that gave you a glimpse of two smooth wings of flaxen hair, Madame Dutour was small, dark, and Latin-looking, and had a southern accent. When I arrived at Saint-Béranger, her hair, no doubt once very black, had already turned silver, and formed an agreeable contrast to her dark matte complexion and her brown eyes. Like the entire sodality,

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both these women lived in a universe that was strange, to say the least.

A circumscribed, stifling world, it was only so in the eyes of outsiders, for to a new boarding student, eleven years old, it meant calm, certainty, roots. The perspectives of this monolithic Catholicism had long since been thoroughly explored, and had no yawning abysses: they had the perfect coherence that marks any total belief. One could not be mistaken about the nature of good and evil at Montluçon, and I imagine that for other students—those who were not suddenly assailed by fits of indefinable terror—this world seemed completely reassuring.

In my memories Saint-Béranger is frozen within the framework—a dusty, faded one, with a slightly rancid odor—of a whole way of provincial life, one that modernity and the Republic had spared, and one that quivered with excitement when the Vichy government was established. For Marshal Pétain was venerated in the sodality; his effigy, like the crucifix and the image of the Virgin, inevitably adorned each one of our classrooms, the parlor, and the dining room. Shortly after my return from Montluçon, Philippe Henriot, the new Vichy Secretary of Information, began his radio campaign. We read his harangues every day; when he was executed by the Resistance, his death seemed an abominable murder to us.

I ADAPTED and became a devoted Saint-Béranger student. I was placed in the fifth form. Like many of my schoolmates, I soon felt a vocation: I wanted to become a priest.

At that time Saint-Béranger was made up of about forty children and youths, two or three young seminarians, a few nuns—the mainstay of the school—and lay sisters. The use of our time was fixed, down to the minute, from morning prayers to those at bedtime. Chapel services alternated with classes, meals, and recesses, the whole unfolding within a tiny, fairly rundown setting, but one that nonetheless had its charms for us: two main buildings, adjoining each other, and an annex leading, on one side, to the little front court where I had made my first appearance, and on the other to a playground surrounded by a wire fence, and beds of Japanese privet that gave off a heady, nauseating odor when in flower. Beyond that lay the city: in the foreground a dreary square, a boulevard, and two enormous cylindrical gas tanks; farther in the distance, almost at the horizon, the military barracks and the buildings of the Dunlop factories that a bombing by English planes had recently partially destroyed.

Study halls and offices occupied the ground floor and the second story of each of the main buildings; above were the dormitories; the dining room was in the annex. As for the chapel, it was reached by a winding staircase that then led to the dormitories. We went from the dormitory to the chapel, from the chapel to the dining room, from the dining room to study hall, from study hall to the chapel, walking one behind the other, in order of size—little ones in front, big ones behind—arms crossed and eyes lowered, either silently or reciting a prayer. In the evening, when we went to chapel after study hall, the damp walls of the stairway echoed with the *"Salve Regina,"* while our shadows flickered as they wound up along the walls, to the rhythm of swaying hand-held kerosene lamps that feebly lighted our way up the stairs.

The rites before going to bed followed. We knelt at the foot of the bed for one last prayer, then got undressed according to firmly-established rules: you took your shirt off first so as to put on a long nightdress, harsh and faded from many washings. Then you had to open the bed by drawing down the covers and the top sheet, sit down on the bed, pull the sheet and the covers over your knees, and then and only then take off your trousers, avoiding, through this double precaution, any offense to modesty. Madame Robert walked about among the beds, checking to make sure that each of us would fall asleep flat on our backs, hands crossed over our hearts. The light would go out, a blue night lamp now the only illumination in the room. Our dormitory mistress then went into her room, a small one adjoining the dormitory from which she could peek at us through a little window. Soon her light went out too, and darkness enveloped twenty or thirty boys already breathing in unison.

The pupils at Saint-Béranger came from all over. Names with an aristocratic *de* mingled with the most common surnames. Children from the surrounding region lived alongside others from Lorraine, Brittany, the Midi, and even from the overseas French colonies; the three D. brothers, for instance, had come straight from Rabat. Most of the pupils came from extremely pious families that had already produced a priest or a nun.

There was nothing about Montluçon to recall the sometimes cynical, often quite equivocal, atmosphere that one associates with large religious establishments, Jesuit schools in particular. Of course, there were few of us, and we were closely watched, day and night. Nonetheless, veritable explosions, sudden, brief, and powerful, occasionally shook our little community. They took the form of quarrels about nothing that broke out without warning among some of the older pupils, usually during evening study hall. Astonishing in themselves in a place such as ours, these fist fights linger in my memory because of their extraordinary violence: in a few moments noses were bleeding, smocks torn, eyes swollen, handfuls of hair torn out; the antagonists used anything that came to hand as weapons, even classroom chairs, and it often took all the authority of Madame Dutour in person to separate them. What could not be expressed otherwise found a spectacular outlet in these fights.

Our studies were based on permanent competi-

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tion. Each week, on Monday morning, Madame Dutour would solemnly read the list of averages, and each class had its members in first and last place. The names of those first in each subject were posted on the honor roll and my own name was soon on it regularly. I was in the limelight: undoubtedly I was going to become a Jesuit, or rather a "*jèze*," as the slang expression of our day had it.

RELIGION dominated our lives. Mass, the adoration of the Holy Sacrament, and meditations marked the essential moments of our days, which, in addition, were punctuated by the prayers that preceded and followed meals and classes, by brief *aves* murmured as we walked from one place to another, as well as by the edifying books read aloud (the lives of saints, for example) at mealtimes in the dining room. It would be wrong to imagine that we experienced this religiosity of every moment of our day as an unbearable fetter: most of us lived it with fervor. We told our beads, tried to outdo one another in ardor, were tempted by mortification of the flesh, and had we been allowed to wear sackcloth and a hair shirt, we would have done so with enthusiasm.

During Holy Week we learned the story of the Passion according to Saint John by heart, first in Latin and then in Greek. Which of us was not gripped with emotion on reciting the last words of Jesus to the Apostles, on the evening of the Last Supper: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love"? The visit to various churches on Holy Thursday elated us, and the Good Friday services overwhelmed us: we were literally following in the footsteps of Jesus, imagining his sufferings, weeping at his death, exulting at the news of his resurrection.

I had passed over to Catholicism, body and soul. The fact that the misdeeds of the Jews were mentioned during Holy Week did not trouble me in the slightest; sometimes, especially during walks, I would even relate the dark intrigues that the usurer Abraham had plotted against the noble companions of Kósciuszko, exiled on the outermost borders of Siberia, thus embellishing, for an ever-eager audience, the adventure stories that were occasionally read to us at mealtimes.

Thus in my own way I had become a renegade: though conscious of my origins, I nevertheless felt at ease within a community of those who had nothing but scorn for Jews, and I incidentally helped stir up this scorn. I had the feeling, never put into words but nonetheless obvious, of having passed over to the compact, invincible majority, of no longer belonging to the camp of the persecuted but, potentially at least, to that of the persecutors.

Each of us has certain secret shames, those brief instants buried in forgetfulness that provoke an immediate burning sensation when an association brings them back to conscious awareness, an instinctive disgust, immediately followed by the desire to see these memories blotted out forever: for me it is the stories I told of the usurer Abraham and his intrigues.

And yet, when Madame Robert, who taught philosophy to those rare pupils at Saint-Béranger who entered the last form, sang the praises of Bergson, who was born a Jew but later came very close to embracing Catholicism, though he refused baptism, and even suggested that God would surely count Bergson among His own, I was secretly proud of learning that so great a philosopher could also be Jewish.

The simple unquestioning faith drummed into us was, as I have said, the one I needed. Wasn't this literal Christianity addressed first of all to the disinherited and forsaken of this world? Had God not tested me because He loved me more than the others, thus pointing out to me the road to sanctity? All these thoughts elated me. But my greatest comfort was devotion to the Virgin. At Saint-Béranger the worship of Mary was the very essence of our religious universe, and in this, too, I became an exemplary pupil. Kneeling before the plaster statue with the sweet face, clad in a long white robe and a sky-blue girdle, her head crowned with tin stars, I rediscovered something of the presence of a mother.

I liked the austere simplicity, the intense self-communion of the early mass at which I sometimes served, not in the little chapel of Saint-Béranger, but in the big chapel of the mother house, a few hundred yards away from the rue de la Garde. For I liked the pomp of church holidays. In reality the big chapel had all the ugliness of plaster-saint church art, with its blue background dotted with gilded fleurs-de-lis. Yet how sumptuous it seemed to me in those days! I was intoxicated by the splendor of the chasubles and the ciboria, the heady odor of the incense, the softness or the majesty of the music; I confess that I have never again felt the emotion that used to grip me when, kneeling in the big chapel during a solemn high mass, I heard Madame Vernier strike the first chords of a fugue or even a simple hymn on the harmonium.

Paul Friedländer had disappeared; Paul-Henri Ferland was someone else.

IN AUGUST 1944, the FFI Resistance fighters* attacked Montluçon. The city was liberated, and through the privet hedge we could see jeeps full of young men armed with submachine guns racing along the boulevard. The Germans had withdrawn to their barracks; the battle raged for a week, more or less, around the fortified rectangle. Taking turns standing on the toilet seats at night, my classmates and I could see the lights of combat; we shivered with excitement

* Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur, popularly known as "Fifis."

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at the mortar shots—and also because we were prolonging our stay in this suspect place longer than was strictly necessary.

The sodality did not wish for the victory of Germany, certainly, but the Resistance, which was known to be Communist and atheist, was nonetheless reviled.

The barracks fell—and so did the Thousand-Year Reich. The war came to an end. I remember the day very well. The church bells pealed and the whole town celebrated. "It's not like in 1918," Madame Robert said to us regretfully. "And then there's our poor Marshal. Let us pray for him." We went for our walk despite all this, and as I remember, the general manifestation of popular joy seemed monstrous and indecent to us. Crowds were jostling each other everywhere, and people were kissing each other, obliging us to lower our eyes—without, however, causing us to make an abrupt *volte-face* the way we had when one day on one of our walks we sighted the troop of female boarding students from Sainte-Jeanne. On the walls, crosses of Lorraine and the hammer and sickle had replaced the Allied snail pasted up by the Germans, and the whole was topped with posters showing the smug, stupid face of the imperturbable Fernandel.

There was no *Te Deum* to celebrate the German surrender at our school, as I remember, but instead a constant concern for the lot of the victor of Verdun. When later on, Pétain's trial began, we faithfully read the speeches of his defense counsel, Maître Isorni, whereas the state prosecutor, who was undoubtedly a Freemason, was unanimously held up to obloquy. The portraits of the Marshal remained on the walls for a long time, and when they were finally taken down it was the end of an era at Saint-Béranger too.

The war was over, my parents had not come back but I waited for news of them daily. The Red Cross thought that it had been able to identify a couple at Theresienstadt whose names corresponded to those of my father and mother, but a typhus epidemic had put the camp in quarantine, and we had to wait. An unreal wait: the days went by without a sign and during all this time I kept asking myself: How will I greet my parents? Will there be any way to express my happiness?

That year all the students at Saint-Béranger, or almost all of them, left on vacation: there were only three or four of us who stayed behind in the deserted school. We wandered idly through the classrooms and I think even to Madame Robert the world appeared unsettled and uncertain. Our daily walks were rather half-hearted, and often we went no farther than the suburbs of the city: we trailed along the edge of the slag heaps, waiting for the sun to set on this melancholy industrial ugliness.

In the evening it was necessary to confront the empty dormitory. Madame Robert wished us good night and went into her room. A few moments later my three comrades were asleep and I was alone, staring at the vague outlines of the room by the blue light of the night lamp. Then I would begin to feel a growing, vague, intolerable fear.

Nothing is worse than a diffuse anxiety with no definite object: you feel it slowly come over you, you recognize the premonitory signs, you are terrified, yet paralyzed before the idea of what is at hand. You can try making your mind a blank and staring at a stretch of wall, or, on the contrary, attempt to think of some precise thing (and at the time I was still quite incapable of imagining such maneuvers), but nothing helps: anxiety *inexorably takes its course. Your mouth grows* dry; you are either very hot or very cold, depending on the day; there is a tight feeling in your chest; your breathing becomes more rapid; your heartbeat speeds up and sweats and chills soon follow. These are only outward signs, however, ones that you scarcely notice, remembered only after the fact, for at the moment nothing matters but the fear. But fear of what?—a fear without an object, an empty fear, fear in its pure state. You are certain of only one thing: one moment more and you won't be able to stand it, you will either burst or dissolve; it is the absolute limit of what you can bear, and yet—

I thought that at any moment I was going to get up out of bed, scream, thrash about, run between the beds and rattle Madame Robert's door, or else wake up my neighbor, Philippe Morin, and tell him. Tell him what? I could just see the scene: I wake up good old Philippe, in the grip of total panic I shake him, he suddenly sits up in bed: "What's the matter? What's happening?" he rubs his eyes but—it's still dark outside! Then he sees Paul-Henri, bending over him, panting. "What's the matter, Paul-Henri? Are you crazy?" "Philippe, help me, I'm afraid." But none of that happened. I didn't budge from my bed, I didn't do a thing. At the very moment when it seemed I was about to suffocate, to break in two perhaps, an ebb tide would suddenly flood over me, followed by a strange sense of well-being. Exhausted, I would fall asleep.

After a while this diffuse anxiety changed, became more precise, focused on one definite thing: from this point on it was death I feared. But then everyone is afraid of death. I grant this, but it is still quite an unusual fear for a twelve-year-old. And, though anyone may be afraid of death, there are very few people who imagine their own death, who live through their last moment, as it were, every evening. That was what happened to me. I learned then, from experience, what "cold sweat" means, for I could literally feel an ice-cold sweat running down my forehead. I would draw my sheets up and bury myself under the covers. To no avail. Unable to divert my thoughts in any way, I would imagine the inevitable end that awaited

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me, whatever I did. Hiding in a dungeon, I knew that the inexorable executioner was on his way, that he would never take the wrong path or retrace his steps; one day he would open the door. I then imagined the very last instant, trying my best to cling to the very last flicker of lucidity, of awareness of being, but no, I had to slip into the void. One last wave bore me upward, and then the ebb tide flooded over me again.

Soon I was not safe from such anxiety attacks even during the day: like the mephitic vapors of old stories, they emerged from the nocturnal abyss to invade the twilight, or, more precisely, the late afternoon, and sometimes the mornings, too.

I knew as I left on the afternoon walk that when the light began to fade, at about five o'clock, I would feel the first waves of anxiety. During all these late afternoons I managed not to say anything, not to show anything, even though my most heartfelt desire was to let other people know. But while the memory of those afternoons remains somewhat vague today, I shall never forget the fear I felt in the mornings, and one morning in particular.

I was to serve at early mass, in the big chapel. It was still dark when I arrived at Sainte-Jeanne. I put on my red cassock and was about to put on my surplice when the first signs of anxiety manifested themselves. You can imagine my panic, for this time I could not wait passively for the wave to pass. I had to serve at mass! I had to give the responses, get to my feet, make all the expected gestures, say exactly the right words—and I didn't think I was capable of doing it. I stood there motionless, my surplice in my hand, and suddenly a thought, even worse than the others, occurred to me: I was destined to live in this state until my very last moment. My life would now be one long silent torture, a continuous fear that would cling ceaselessly to my skin, that I would never be able to rid myself of. Father H. stuck his head in the door: "Come along, hurry up." I put the surplice on mechanically, picked up the censer, and mechanically started up toward the altar. I didn't stumble, I didn't drop the missal, or the cruets, or the ciborium, I didn't faint, and I gave the responses without making one single mistake. There were three of us at that moment: the one who was afraid, the one watching him, and the one serving the mass, like a machine. Was I going crazy?

I would have liked to confide in Madame Dutour, snuggle up close to her, cry my heart out, listen to reassuring words, feel a caress, but I didn't dare.

And then the anxiety disappeared—for a time.

In August, Madame Fraenkel, an old friend and fellow refugee who had shared those two years in Néris, came to visit me. She was a non-Jew from Vienna, married to an Austrian Jew, and she and my mother had been good friends. I asked her, as I did everyone I met from the old days, for news of my parents. She stared straight at me and said, very slowly and distinctly: "My poor Paul, don't you understand that your parents are dead?"

It was now clear that this would be my last year at Saint-Béranger. A guardianship council had taken my destiny in hand, a guardian had been appointed, and at the end of the school year I was to be handed over to his care.

Conscious of the dangers that would threaten my faith when I went back out in the world, the ladies of the sodality, for their part, tried to forearm me against these perils. I was confirmed, and then, this time ahead of my age group, I made my solemn communion. Father L., a Jesuit and a teacher who had once been at Saint-Béranger, sometimes came to preach a retreat at Montluçon. He had taken a liking to me, and Madame Dutour decided that a conversation with the good father would be in order. As he was now teaching at a school in Saint-Etienne and had little free time, I set out to visit him, a little after New Year's.

From every point of view this trip was the beginning of a great adventure for me. Just imagine: for the first time in three years I was leaving the rue de la Garde by myself; for the first time in my life I was taking the train by myself—and at three o'clock in the morning, with a change at Roanne! I must remind the reader not to forget the period: traveling by train in January or February 1946 was an epic undertaking. In any case, for that youngster, oddly clad in navy blue, with a cardboard suitcase three-quarters empty, the threadbare overcoats, the worn jackets, and the sweaty odor of all the passengers—like the dirty snow on the slopes, the fog that let only the frenetic gallop of the telephone poles and the brief flash of stations through—aroused in him an intense and incomprehensible joy, a real feeling of love and brotherhood.

On arriving at Saint-Etienne, I was in no hurry to discover the house of the sodality where I was to spend the night. I strolled through the streets. I knew I was on the eve of great changes, without being able to imagine precisely what circumstances would bring them about or what they would be like. I sniffed the future.

I had received the first pocket money of my life for this trip. And suddenly, without my realizing it, I quite naturally heard all the injunctions of the past: unperceived by me, a tenuous link was being recreated. What could I have bought with these few francs in my pocket? I did not hesitate an instant, and went off to buy two books. On entering the little bookstore, I suddenly rediscovered the familiar odor of printed paper and dusty covers. These were not the splendid copies in my father's library, but at least they were books. Not textbooks, missals, or even the life of some saint. *Real* books.

My choice, I grant, is not easily explained. Let us therefore leave it unexplained. I bought a book

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on cave exploring whose name escapes me, and *First on the Rope*, by Roger Frison-Roché. An abyss and a summit. I read the novel on mountain climbing immediately, that very evening, and thoroughly enjoyed it. (It was confiscated the moment I came back to school, for on leafing through it the good ladies of the sodality discovered not only a tale of masculine endurance but a very brief love story too.)

The next morning I set out in search of the school in order to meet the priest. The porter did not show me into the little parlor off the entry hall, but into the teachers' work room. I felt instantly at home there: the studious atmosphere, the piles of work on the tables, and above all the music playing softly on the radio. Learning had an entirely different air about it here from what it had at Montluçon. Was I too going to become a "*jèze*"? Could I too belong to this élite some day? That was exactly what I wanted that morning, and I later spoke to Father L. about it. Three years' more schooling and then the novitiate. The path was already laid out: what elation!

Father L. suggested a walk. After strolling briefly through the streets of the town, we entered a church. It was a gloomy day and the stained-glass windows let no light through; in the choir, however, on both sides of the altar, the little flames of dozens of candles gave an air of unreality to this not particularly beautiful church.

We had circled the nave in no time, but we halted in one of the side chapels, talking in low voices of the war and of my parents, and contemplating a picture of Christ on the Cross, so dulled that even in the flickering light of the candles one could see nothing but a face and a body, as though they were suspended in a void. "Didn't your parents die at Auschwitz?" Father L. asked. What did this name mean? Where was Auschwitz? He must have understood then that I knew almost nothing of the murder of Europe's Jews: to me the death of my parents was enveloped in vague images, indistinct circumstances that bore no relation to the real course of events. And so, in front of this obscure Christ, I listened: Auschwitz, the trains, the gas chambers, the crematory ovens, the millions of dead—

When we got back to the school Father L. read a few pages of an autobiographical text in which a historian who was a French Jew describes how, when still a child, he discovered anti-Semitism for the first time. Who was it that he read? I am unable to say today, but all through this decisive day I had the impression that the essential pieces of a puzzle that, heretofore, had made no sense, were falling into place.

For the first time, I felt myself to be Jewish—no longer despite myself or secretly, but through a sensation of absolute loyalty. It is true that I knew nothing of Judaism and was still a Catholic. But something had changed. A tie had been reestablished, an identity was emerging, a confused one certainly, contradictory perhaps, but from that day forward linked to a central axis of which there could be no doubt: in some manner or other I was Jewish—whatever this term meant in my mind.

The attitude of Father L. himself profoundly influenced me: to hear him speak of the lot of the Jews with so much emotion and respect must have been an important encouragement for me. He did not press me to choose one path or the other—and perhaps he would have preferred to see me remain Catholic—but his sense of justice (or was it a profound charity?) led him to recognize my right to judge for myself, by helping me to renew the contact with my past.

I DO NOT have the slightest recollection of the return to Montluçon and yet how moved I must have been! How confused my thoughts must have been! So I was fully Jewish, but I was also Catholic and, at that time, quite determined to remain one. How then to reconcile the two, how, above all, to know what it meant to be Jewish?

I could only have had a very vague notion of Jewishness, an image composed of the most disparate elements: Jewish origins obviously, the children in my two early schools, M. Fraenkel and his jokes, the story of Hanukkah, the usurer Abraham, the murderers of Christ, Bergson, too, and now Auschwitz and the long trail of persecutions and deaths; the image of our death.

Wasn't it madness to identify with my Jewishness when Paul-Henri Ferland had no remaining link to the Jews? For I could now remain a Catholic, without the slightest hesitation: hadn't my ties with the past disappeared forever? I dreamed endlessly of my future as a priest and was convinced of my vocation. So where did this need of a return, a return toward a decimated, humiliated, miserable group, come from? Had I been born of a "really" Jewish family, I would at least have had coherent memories, but in my case this inner obstacle, this constant reminder played no role: I was free.

What secret work was accomplished within me during this trip? What instinct, buried beneath acquired loyalty, suddenly caused a profounder loyalty to emerge? An obscure rupture, brought about by the astonishing discovery at Saint-Etienne.

When I returned to Saint-Béranger, I asked people to stop using my borrowed name and reassumed the name that was mine.

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Writing About Oneself

Alfred Kazin

I DO not know what "autobiography" is: the genre changes with each new example. What I myself have tried to write in my three "autobiographical" books, *A Walker in The City, Starting Out in the Thirties,* and *New York Jew,* is personal history, a form of my own influenced by the personal writings of Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman. Its passion and beat come from my life *in* history, recorded since I was a boy in notebooks that I value not for their facts but for the surprise I attain by writing to myself and for myself. "I write for myself and strangers," said Gertrude Stein. The strangers, dear reader, are an afterthought.

In my experience, Americans sooner or later bring any discussion around to themselves. American writers tend to project the world as a picture of themselves even when they are not writing directly about their own experience. No doubt this has much to do with the emphasis on the self in America's ancestral Protestantism. Theology in America tends to be Protestant. The self remains the focal point of American literary thinking. From Jonathan Edwards to Hemingway, we are confronted by the primitive and unmediated self arriving alone on the American strand, then battling against opposing selves who share with him only the experience of being an American.

The deepest side of being an American is the sense of being like nothing before us in history—often enough, like no one else around us who is not immediately recognized as one of our tradition, faith, culture, profession. "What do you do, bud?" is the poignant beginning of American conversation. The question—"Who are you? What am I to expect from you?"—put into the language of history, means that I am alone in a world that was new to begin with and that still feels new to me because the experience of being so *much* a "self"—constantly explaining oneself and telling one's own story—is as traditional in the greatest American writing as it is in a barroom.

What is being talked about is inevitably oneself as a creature of time and place, the common era that is the subject of history. Every American story revolving around the self, even Henry Miller as a derelict in Paris, is a story of making it against a background symbolically American. Miller made it to Paris after years of being an indistinguishable, big-city nobody. In Paris, this American nobody wrote himself up as somebody, a symbol of the free life. The point of the story—as it was for Ben Franklin arriving in Philadelphia; Emerson crossing "a bare common" in ecstasies at his newly recognized spiritual powers; Whitman nursing the helpless wounded soldiers in the Civil War hospitals; Henry Adams in awe of the dynamo at the 1900 Paris exposition; E. E. Cummings observing his fellow prisoners in *The Enormous Room;* Hemingway in Paris cafés recording his boyhood in Upper Michigan—is that he was making a book out of it, a great book, an exemplary tale of some initiating and original accomplishment that could have been imagined only in an American book. The background seems to say that although the creative spirit is peculiarly alone in America, it is alone *with* America. Here the self, the active, partisan, acquisitive self, born of society, is forever remaking itself—but not in the direction that Keats spoke of the world, as "a vale of soul-making."

We tend to emphasize the self as a creature of history and history as a human creation. Even Emerson, the last truly religious, God-oriented writer we have had, the last to believe that the world exists entirely *for* the individual and that "Nature is meant to serve"—even Emerson wobbles on the independent existence of the individual soul, feels easier with a universal cloud-cover he calls the "Oversoul" than he does with the traditional religious soul in God's keeping, that is, the soul as human index and analogue of a spiritual world. What Emerson is talking about in "Nature," "The American Scholar," "The Divinity School Address," is the "active soul" of the writer as a teacher to humanity. Still, Emerson, whose doctrine gave full faith and comfort to rugged individualism, is a great modern writer not yet fully secularized. He despises fiction, makes poet and prophet interchangeable terms, *preaches* the necessity to leave the church behind and find God in one's "immeasurable mind." Yet he was so double-sided that he also wrote the first great Ameri-

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ALFRED KAZIN's many books include *On Native Grounds* and *Bright Book of Life.* The present essay will appear, in somewhat different form, in a collection of pieces by American biographers, *Telling Lives,* to be published later this spring by New Republic Books/National Portrait Gallery.

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can book on the "old country"—*English Traits*. How strange that the same man, in his journals as well as in his famous lectures on everything at large, usually plays the preacher. What he habitually says is that he has taken himself out of the church, out of formal Christianity, in order to prove that one man, by himself, can be a bridge to divine truth.

And that man is you, my fellow American. You can become as great an artist in words as Ralph Waldo Emerson: all you have to do is to become a church to yourself and preach from your own immortal genius. July 15, 1838, a Sunday evening before the senior class in Divinity College, Harvard:

> And now, my brothers, you will ask, What in these desponding days can be done by us?
>
> Wherever a man comes, there comes revolution. The old is for slaves. When a man comes, all books are legible, all things transparent, all religions are forms. . . . Yourself a newborn bard of the Holy Ghost, cast behind you all conformity and acquaint man at first hand with Deity. . . . Live with the pleasure of the immeasurable mind. . . .

AMERICA itself seemed immeasurable in opportunity. "Nature," which meant everything outside of man, existed to serve man on this continent. An American armed with the primacy of the self can do anything, especially in words. Like Emerson, he can invent a religion just for free spirits and call it literature. Like Thoreau, he can turn a totally lonely life, the death of his beloved brother John, his penny-pinching, lung-destroying, graphite-owning family, into the most beautiful prose fable we have of man perfectly at home with Nature. Like Whitman, who took self-revelation as his basic strategy, he can propose a whole new self—which for millions he has become. Whitman wrote a great book in the form of a personal epic, compelled and still compels many readers to believe him as not only the desperado poet he was but as one of the supreme teachers of a troubled humanity. And then in prose, this worldly failure used the Civil War as an abundant backdrop to his picture of himself tending the wounded soldiers, an American St. Francis, who reincarnated himself as a poet thanks to war and the assassination on Good Friday of his beloved Lincoln.

Henry Adams, in the *Education*, reverses his loneliness as a widower, his isolation as a historical imagination, into the exquisite historical myth of a Hamlet kept from his rightful kingship—a Hamlet too good for Denmark, a Hamlet who nevertheless knew everybody in the world worth knowing, a Hamlet who finally turned the tables on science, the only knowledge worth having. Adams's last superlative myth is a world that in the 12th century stood still to worship the Virgin but in the 20th is racing madly, whirling into outer space in its lust to satisfy Emerson's "immeasurable mind"—intellectual power.

Henry James, in the autobiographical prefaces to his collected works, and in that staggering personal reverie over what the New World had become, *The American Scene*, showed what mastership over the visible world the literary American self could attain. William James, in the personal testimony that is among the most valuable sections of that Emersonian manual in spiritual self-help, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, showed—in the classic pattern of Protestant autobiography from *Pilgrim's Progress* to John Woolman's *Journal*—that a basic function of such writing is to cure oneself of guilt and self-division.

William James was not a formal psychiatrist in America, though he was the student and colleague of those at Harvard who helped to inaugurate this still nebulous therapy. But Dr. James was a genius—it was his best gift—at putting himself together again, in words. To heal thyself is a classic reason for a worried man's becoming a physician, especially a psychiatrist. But no psychologist to my knowledge has openly confessed his divided self so eloquently as did William James; no other has so clearly erected a whole system of *belief* to deal with it. William James is Emerson's true successor at the end of the century. Emerson never confessed to doubts and was, as Henry James, Sr. said bitterly, a man impossible to get hold of "without a handle." William James, more than anyone in his time, understood the American idea that religion is to help us shed our sickness, especially in books.

Hemingway was to say that the only psychiatrist *he* needed was a Smith-Corona. But Hemingway, like Saul Bellow in our day, used his own experience obsessively in the form of fiction. True, fiction is never simply autobiography—not when it is written by genuine novelists. The autobiographical impulse in fiction takes the form of satire, burlesque, grandiose mythology, as in *Moby-Dick*. It often mocks the hero and the novel form itself; it generally becomes something altogether different from autobiography by introducing so many other leading characters. Saul Bellow has written one novel, *The Victim*, in which he has not sat for a leading character. Sammler and Charles Citrine, Herzog, and even Henderson represent Bellow in various stages of his life, different moods, different wives. But there are so many other people and points of interest in his novels, like the frolicsome portrait of the poet Delmore Schwartz in *Humboldt's Gift*, that it is clear that the creative process for this self-renewing novelist is what makes the human comedy balance out right—not Bellow's own history.

For the non-fiction writer (as I can testify), personal history is directly an effort to find salvation, to make one's own experience come out right. This is as true of Edmund Wilson in his many autobiographical essays and notebooks as it is of James Baldwin, Malcolm X, Claude Brown. It is even true of straight autobiography by fiction writers. Hemingway's account of his apprentice-

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ship to letters in Paris, *A Moveable Feast*, is an effort to save himself by recovering an idyllic past. Even the most lasting autobiographies—St. Augustine, Rousseau, Henry Adams—tend to be case histories limited to the self as its own history to begin with, then the self as the history of a particular moment and crisis in human history.

WHOLLY personal documents like Whitman's *Specimen Days*, Adams's *Education*, Conrad Aiken's *Ushant*, Malcolm X's *Autobiography*, can be more lasting than many a novel. What preserves such books is the news they bring us of history in a new form. In every notable case of this form, from Franklin's *Autobiography* to Richard Wright's *Black Boy* and Frederick Exley's *A Fan's Notes*, we have the epic of personal struggle, a "situation" rather than a plot. The writer turns himself into a representative sinner or Christian or black or Jew—in Exley's case, a comically incurable drunk.

This person, we say to ourselves as we encounter Franklin arriving in Philadelphia, has *lived* history. These are people recounting their fame. Here is Gibbon: "It was at Rome, on the 15th of October 1764, as I sat musing amid the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind." But Gibbon's autobiography is all about how important he was; he is incapable of making fun of himself. It is not from his innocently pompous memoirs that we learn that the great historian as a member of Parliament from a rotten borough fell asleep during the debates on the American revolution. One can *live* history in a quite different way, as witness Franklin's comic account of himself walking up Market Street, carrying two rolls, eating a third, and seeing his future wife "when she standing at the door saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward appearance."

To "live" history is not of course to command it, or even one's fate in life. To live history is to express most memorably a relationship to the past, to a particular setting, to a moment, sometimes even to a particular set of buildings, as Henry James does so vibrantly in *The American Scene*, where buildings talk to one another because James's mind is so busily interrogating them.

Walt Whitman is a particular example of the self living history—first as a mere spectator, then as our common fate, history as the ultimate explanation of our individual fortunes in life. In *Song of Myself*, Whitman wrote of the historical visions he painted of America at mid-century—*I am the man, I suffer'd, I was there.* In his great diary of the Civil War, *Specimen Days*, Whitman describes himself going down to Washington to look for his brother George, wounded in the second battle of Bull Run. What Whitman does not say is that he was at lowest ebb as poet and man. *Leaves of Grass* had failed, he really had nothing to occupy himself with at the moment, and he must have had an instinct that the war would be one of those historical tragedies in which the rejected of history find their souls again, in which the epics of the race are reborn.

Early in *Specimen Days*, Whitman describes the beaten Federal soldiers in retreat lying along the streets of Washington. Only Whitman would have caught the peculiar poignance in the contrast between the marble Capitol and the helpless, often neglected suffering in what was now a very confused capital. The most splendid instance of Whitman's eye picking out such historical ironies is the description of the wounded soldiers lying in the Patent Office:

> A few weeks ago the vast area of the second story of that noblest of Washington buildings was crowded close with rows of sick, badly wounded, and dying soldiers. They were placed in three very large apartments. I went there many times. It was a strange, solemn, and with all its features of suffering and death, a sort of fascinating sight. . . . Two of the immense apartments are filled with high and ponderous glass cases, crowded with models in miniature of every kind of utensil, machine, or invention it ever entered into the mind of man to conceive; and with curiosities and foreign presents. . . . It was indeed a curious scene, especially at night when lit up. The glass cases, the beds, the forms lying there, the galley above, and the marble pavement underfoot. . . .

Whitman does not neglect to tell us at the end of this description of the Patent Office that the wounded soldiers have now been all removed. There *was* a historical moment; he was there, and just in time to record fully the contrast between American technical genius and what war does. Whitman was not a soldier, not even a real nurse. History may well wonder if he gave as much to the soldiers as they gave him. They made possible his great poems and prose of the war. But there is present in *Specimen Days* and in the cycle of war poems, *Drum Taps*, a kind of historical light or atmosphere that is extraordinary. It is a quality one finds only in the greatest books—from the *Iliad* to *War and Peace*—that show history itself as a character. A certain light plays on all the characters, the light of what we call history. And what is history in this ancient sense but the commemoration of our common experience, the unconscious solidarity of a people celebrated in the moments of greatest stress, as the Bible celebrates over and again history as the common experience of the race, from Creation to Redemption?

MY favorite example of personal history as commemoration is Henry Adams's account of being taken as a boy to Washington. He has already told us in many indirect and delightful ways that he is the grandson and

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great-grandson of Presidents. He is staying with his grandmother, the widow of John Quincy Adams:

> Coming down in the early morning from his bedroom in his grandmother's house—still called the Adams building—in F Street and venturing outside into air reeking with the thick odor of the catalpa trees, he found himself on the earth-road, or village street, with wheel tracks meandering from the colonnade of the Treasury hard by, to the white marble columns and fronts of the Post Office and Patent Office which faced each other in the distance, like white Greek temples in the abandoned gravel-pits of a deserted Syrian city.

This is a passage of historical music. The key words are sacred names, as Proust said of Combray, as Gibbon rang the litany of historical names in the great passage enumerating Rome—the ruins of the Capitol, barefooted friars singing vespers in the temple of Jupiter. Adams is also rendering the art of history by locating himself as a boy of twelve wandering from the house of "Madame President" through the ancient, sleepy, undistinguished, unfinished Washington of 1850. Unlike Gibbon's Rome, all in ruins, Adams's Washington is seen by *us* as the powerful America of the future, but strangely ignorant of its future as we see the earth-road, the village streets, wheel tracks. But note that the treasury has a Greek colonnade, and—most rewarding detail—the white marble columns and fronts of the Post Office and Patent Office in the distance face each other like white Greek temples in the abandoned gravel-pits of a deserted Syrian city. The innocently pompous all-marble Washington of the future, where Adams wrote this passage in 1905 sitting in his great house just across Lafayette Square from the White House, must contend in our mind with the beautifully supple imagination of Adams the great historian picturing Syria forgotten in the ruins of the Roman empire.

When Adams wrote this passage, America had just taken the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Cuba. Adams's sometime friend, Theodore Roosevelt, whom he amusedly tolerated as a gentleman from his own set, though he thought the President insane, was enjoying the Presidency with unholy zest. The moment had already come at the great Paris exposition of 1900 when Adams discovered that his "historical back" was broken by the sight of the dynamo:

> The planet itself seemed less impressive, in its old-fashioned, deliberate, annual, or daily revolution, than this huge wheel, revolving within arm's length at some vertiginous speed, and barely murmuring—scarcely humming an audible warning to stand a hair's breadth further for respect of power—while it would not wake the baby lying close against its frame. Before the end, one began to pray to it; inherited instinct taught the natural expression of man before silent and infinite force. . . .

This is the self living history as its own fate. The barely murmuring dynamo will turn soon into the rocket, Adams into Norman Mailer at Cape Kennedy awed by the towering hangar built to house the moon rocket. The mountebank in the White House, Theodore Roosevelt, will become the succession of Presidents after Vietnam trapped in their own powerlessness. History as our own fate is what the grandiose theoretical last chapters of the *Education* have to teach us. And that is the deepest meaning of "autobiography," historically considered. Adams in Washington, 1850, yields to Adams in Washington, 1900, to ourselves in Washington and New York in 2000.

But something new has entered into 20th-century experience. We no longer identify ourselves *with* history. Joyce's Stephen Dedalus said that "history is the nightmare from which I am trying to awaken." History since 1914 has become for the "educated classes" of the West not so much a memory as a threat. This may be one reason for the marked failure of "history" to awaken enthusiasm or even much intellectual curiosity among the young. To have a sense of history one must consider *oneself* a piece of history. Although our age will be remembered most of all for its endlesss multiplication of technological innovation and scientific information, the "feel" of the present is that history is out of control, beyond all the prophecies and calculations made for it in the 19th century, when the organization of industrial society was plainly the pattern of the future. Hence the unconscious despair of people whose first legend is the city of peace built on a hill, a new world to be born, a new man to be made.

But to the others, who are just arising in history and for whom history is their effort to rise, the self knows history only as nemesis and liberation from oppression. Hence in our immediate culture we get more and more a view of literature as political rhetoric. Imaginative literature even in our privileged society is now so much under the pressure of journalism, documentary, the media, the daily outrage and atrocity, above all, unconscious fright, that autobiography of one kind or another, often the meanest travel report through contemporary life, has become all too fashionable, omnipresent. On every hand we seem to see people saying *I am the man, I got the story first, I was there.* The man on the spot may be only a ventriloquist's dummy, like most news commentators, reading what he has been given to read. But literature does essentially nothing different when it appeals, as our most gifted writers do, only to the public experience of politics, the moon voyage, the political assassination, the seeming irreconcilability of the sexes.

The real problem for "personal history" now is how to render this excess of outer experience as personal but not private, and how to turn inces-

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sant reportage back into personal literature. Here the retreat from history has led to so clamorous a cry of personal weakness, so much confessional poetry and fiction, that we may well ask what the spell is on all of us—not least our readers. For Sylvia Plath, Robert Lowell, John Berryman, Adrienne Rich, Charles Olsen, Robert Duncan, Allen Ginsberg, Anne Sexton, Diane Wakoski would not be the stars of the classroom nowadays if there were not so many readers who seem to read no poetry and prose that is not confessional, who demand that literature be about the confessional self —and be an invitation to become confessional themselves.

Erik Erikson says that all confession is an effort to throw off a curse. "Guilt" seems more endemic than it ever did. It is certainly more popular. Why? No doubt because it makes possible a confessional literature that is self-dramatization in the absence of moral authority. At the same time, the dramatization of the self in American literature goes back to a very old theme. How well have *I* made out? What am I to think of *my* life, all things considered? Could it have been any different? Let us not deceive ourselves: each person, especially in this historically still most hopeful of countries, is constantly making up the progress report of his life, and knows that in this respect everyone we know, love, and hate, everyone to whom we have ever been tied, shares our interests exactly: this life, my life, this time. So the anxious but somehow thrivingly preoccupied self, in a culture where personal fortune and happiness are more real than God has become even to many believers, cannot help being freely articulate about itself, and confessing. And if the confession is an attempt to ward off a curse, writing it out is also a boast: to be able to write one's life, to make one's way successfully through so many ghosts, between so many tombs, is indeed a boast.

YET I believe that history does exist, that it is still meaningful, and that we will all find our fate in the book of history. That gives me the courage to write, for to write is still in some way to put the seeming insignificance of human existence into perspective. It is the need, the wish, and please God the ability, to reorder our physical fate by mental means, a leap of the imagination, an act of faith. Wallace Stevens once wondered in an essay whether it is not "the violence within that protects us from the violence without." The "violence within" is the effort to make a mental construct that shall hang together —that shall be within the inner landscape a seamless and uninterruptible web—that can prove, as Henry James said, that "the whole truth about anything is never told; we can only take what groups together."

Violence is distinguished by gaps, discontinuities, inconsistency, confusion condensed into power—but no less blind and chaotic for that. The life of mere experience, and especially of history as the supposedly total experience we ridiculously claim to know, can seem an inexplicable series of unrelated moments. But language, even when it is most a mimicry of disorder, is distinguished from violence, atrocity, deceit, by relating word to word, sentence to sentence, thought to thought, man to this final construct on a page that is always something different from mere living.

So that is why I write, to reorder an existence that man in the mass will never reorder for me. Even autobiography is a necessary stratagem to gain something more important than itself. By the time experience is distilled enough through our minds to set some particular thing down on paper, so much unconscious reordering has gone on that even the naive wish to be wholly "truthful" fades before the intoxication of line, pattern, form.

As Stephen Crane said, art is a child of pain. Existence is itself an increasingly anxious matter for many Americans. Precisely because the material power is greatest in this country, we have had the most frantic illusion of control. So the disappointment and anger are greater. The self becomes the accuser, as it so often seems only the target—the self adrift in a self-contained universe. This, to Americans caught off base, can seem as frightening as the silence of the infinite spaces seemed to Pascal:

> When I consider the short duration of my life, swallowed up in the eternity before and after, the little space which I fill, and even can see, engulfed in the infinite immensity of spaces of which I am ignorant, and which know me not, I am frightened, and am astonished at being here rather than there; for there is is no reason why here rather than there, why now rather than then. Who has put me here? By whose order and direction have this place and time been allotted to me?

One writes to make a home for oneself, on paper, in the teeth of Milton's *blind Fury with the abhòrred shears, who slits the thin-spun life.* In our time history, too, can be the "blind Fury." But to write is to live it again, and in this personal myth and resurrection of our experience, to give honor to our lives.

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Arab Money and the Universities

Seth Cropsey

A QUIET but important change has been occurring in foreign gift-giving to American universities. Until recently such donations generally funded scientific projects of mutual interest to donor and university, such as communications, environmental planning, or health. Now, money coming primarily (but not exclusively) from Arabs is being given to establish programs, conferences, and centers that concentrate on the study of a particular land or culture. In one case the donor has virtually been given license to run and staff academic programs. In others, university officials have simply conformed to the donors' expectations. This is a new and alarming development which threatens to turn gift-giving into a great pork barrel and in so doing to undermine the scholarly disinterestedness of the university.

SAUDI ARABIA has a relationship with southern California which goes back at least twenty years and is based on a similarity of terrain, climate, and resources. Southern Californians made the desert habitable and tapped its oil reserves, and the Saudis came to learn how they had done it. When oil money flowed in Saudi Arabia, business in southern California reaped a big share of contracts. Some of the oil revenues have found their way back to the University of Southern California (USC).

In 1976, the Saudis gave a million dollars to endow the King Faisal chair in Islamic Studies at USC. Willard Beling, a former Aramco official, was chosen as the first occupant. After the establishment of the chair was announced in 1976, the Saudi Minister of Finance and National Economy, Mohammed Abalkhail, wrote to USC president John R. Hubbard: "It is our understanding that the first incumbent of the chair shall be Professor Willard A. Beling. Future incumbents," continued Abalkhail, "shall be chosen by the university in consultation with the Saudi Minister of Higher Education; such consultation will be within the acceptable academic traditions of the university." Yet according to "acceptable academic traditions," donors are not consulted on the question of who will fill a chair, especially after the first incumbent, except as a formal courtesy.

The Saudis' next arrangement with USC had to do with establishing a Middle East Center. For this they attempted to interest American businessmen, working through J. R. Fluor. The Fluor Corporation did $272 million of construction in Saudi Arabia in 1977, and currently holds about $5 billion in Saudi contracts in the oil industry. Fluor is also chairman of the USC Board of Trustees. He began asking American businessmen for contributions to the center last May. Corporate executives whose companies were already in Saudi Arabia or wished to enter were invited, along with scholars, to a King Faisal Conference in Santa Barbara. There they listened to six panel discussions: Faisal the Reformer; Faisal's Style; Faisal's American Relationship; Faisal the Man; Faisal the King; Faisal the Diplomat.

The businessmen also heard an appeal for funds from Willard Beling and Dr. Ghazi Algosaibi, one of Beling's former students and now the Saudi Minister of Industry and Electricity. An observer at the Santa Barbara conference later said he was "horrified" at the pressure placed on American businessmen to contribute. Fluor himself has not denied the use of implicit threats in encouraging businessmen to contribute. "I'm sure one could come to that conclusion if you want to come to that conclusion, yes," he told NBC News in November. After the Santa Barbara conference, a foundation was incorporated to fund the Middle East Center; according to USC President Hubbard, available funds were a "bottomless well."

The center's prospectus and the care taken to insure its independence from normal university controls suggested that it would represent the Saudis' view of the Middle East—a view which excludes Israel or treats the Jewish state as an international outlaw. Under its original plan, the Middle East Center was to be allowed a free hand in making its own academic appointments and drawing up its own curriculum. In addition, it possessed "a voice in the appointment and employment of USC faculty teaching courses on the Middle East *outside the center*" (emphasis added). When word of this proposal spread, some trustees, as well as the American Jewish Committee, began privately to object. A new contract was drawn up between USC and the Middle East Center abandoning the controversial provision but changing little else. An essentially autonomous Middle East Center was still envisioned, existing within USC but free from its control. University faculty members predictably became angry when they learned what the administration and a slim majority of trustees had undertaken without them. Today, the matter is public.

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and another version of the contract will have to be written.

Other attempts to influence teaching in American colleges have been more successful. At Duke University in September 1978 a program in Islamic and Arabian Development Studies was established with $20,000 from a local foundation and $20,000 from the Saudi government. One of this program's stated aims is "to provide for the eastern part of the United States a balance, giving the attention that is being given this subject by the University of Southern California." Another aim is "the convening of an international conference which will be given national publicity and which will include Saudi officials and scholars as well as American officials, businessmen, and publicists."

Elsewhere, attempts to set up such programs have failed altogether. In early 1977, an administration official at Swarthmore wrote a proposal "to encourage programs of Arab studies in American colleges." Complaining that already existing programs such as those at Harvard, Princeton, and the University of Chicago "may be suffering from inertia and obfuscated policies," the official was nevertheless optimistic that "with time and patient stewardship [the Arab studies program] presents great possibilities for the spread of basic understandings of Arab concern and the *encouragement of a favorable public-relations climate in this country*" (emphasis added).

This proposal fell victim to its own sponsorship by the Triad Foundation, which was to provide $590,000 for a joint program at Swarthmore, Haverford, and Bryn Mawr. The Triad Foundation is the charitable arm of Adnan Kashoggi, an extraordinarily successful Saudi businessman who was wanted for questioning by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) at the time his foundation was being considered as a source of funds for this project. The SEC wanted to know whether Kashoggi was involved in the 1975 foreign-payoff scandal—a question raised by the congressional testimony of Northrop and Lockheed executives who said that he had asked for and received money to bribe Saudi officials. This connection alarmed the three colleges, which rejected the idea of the program.

The Saudis' anti-Jewish policies, or—as the author of the Pennsylvania proposal phrased it—"their differences with Zionists" caused two other institutions to break off arrangements as well. When the Massachusetts Institute of Technology sought a clause allowing it to withdraw in case of discrimination, the Saudis abandoned a planned agreement; and a group of Midwestern universities suspended a consulting contract when the Saudis denied a visa to a Jewish dean.

THE Saudis are not alone in attempted benefaction. Libya's University of Alfateh in Tripoli and the University of Alabama at Birmingham were to enter into "a mutually beneficial and cooperative program" under a proposal announced by Alabama's president in February 1977. The basic plan was harmless. The University of Alabama would place Libyan postgraduate students in various medical-training positions and Libya would pay. In return, Alabama faculty would lend their services to the University of Alfateh's medical school. But the University of Alabama also declared its intention to "explore the possibility of establishing a 'Center for Islamic Studies' and a program in the Arabic language as a part of the College of Humanities." Libyan "faculty members, educational materials, and any other support for such a program," said Alabama politely, "would be most welcome and greatly appreciated." Alabama faculty members, concerned at the prospect of Libyan government-supported professors teaching Islamic studies at their school, told their concerns to Alabama's president, who shortly scrapped the entire program.

Libya's state-supported Arab Development Institute also wished to give money to an American university—the University of Pennsylvania. Two initial projects were contemplated under the proposal. The first, a joint study, was to examine Libyan social structure. The second aimed at teaching Middle Eastern history and culture in American high schools. An ad-hoc committee appointed to review the proposal found that it did not adequately meet university guidelines for contracts funded by foreign governments. In rejecting the proposal, the ad-hoc committee doubted the "wisdom of accepting any foreign funding for the development of curricula studying the history of the area from which the funds are coming."

Different universities, however, have different standards. The Libyans' search for a beneficiary was ultimately rewarded—and handsomely. In mid-1977, Georgetown University accepted a gift of $750,000 from Libya to endow a chair at the university's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies. The gift was the largest of several which have been made to the center since it was established in 1975. Some other donors are Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, the Sultanate of Oman—and the U. S. Office of Education.

The chair has aroused controversy from the beginning. When it was first announced, the columnist Art Buchwald wrote a letter to the student newspaper in which he accused Georgetown of accepting "blood money from one of the most notorious regimes in the world today" and suggested that the university also consider establishing a "Brezhnev Studies Program in Human Rights or an Idi Amin Chair in Genocide." To this gibe Peter Krough, dean of Georgetown's School of Foreign Service and chairman of the center's executive committee, answered open-mindedly, "I don't know Uganda. I've never been to Uganda. I don't know Idi Amin." Michael Hudson, the center's director, said that Buchwald's characterization of the Libyans was not really accurate. "The Libyans," declared Hudson, "say they're just as anti-terrorist as anyone else."

THE Center for Contemporary Arab Studies is also a center of pro-Arab politics. Last spring, when Israeli troops entered Leba-

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non to attack PLO guerrilla bases, Dr. Clovis Maksoud, a visiting lecturer at the center and formerly editor-in chief of the Beirut based *Al-Nahar,* had a statement for the press: "The invasion doesn't constitute a response to the Palestinian raid. Instead it points to a contingency plan by Israel to gain suzerainty over southern Lebanon. Their object for a long time has been to prevent the policing of this area by Arab peace-keeping forces." This went out as an *official press release* of Georgetown University. Buchwald, the only national columnist who has followed the issue, wrote, "I don't see why the PLO has to have a PR organization when Georgetown is doing all their work for them."

In his 1977 book, *Arab Politics,* Michael Hudson went out of his way to praise the Libyan regime and its dictator. That regime, says Hudson, "presents itself as *more* Islamic, *more* pan-Arab, and *more* democratic than any other regime. Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qaddafi, the handsome and youthful leader of the coup, . . . has come to personify the Libyan revolution. . . . But heroic leader that he is," continues Hudson, "Qaddafi apparently does not wish to dominate the Libyan system. . . . He frequently threatens to retire completely and never tires of insisting that Libyans must learn to govern themselves rather than relying on any particular leader." This, of a man Sadat has called a "mental case," a man who rejects and prohibits parliaments, political parties, and plebiscites, a dictator whose support of international terrorism is unswerving.

The line was drawn on contributions at Georgetown last summer, although not by the Arab studies center. The center solicited a $50,000 gift from Iraq. Father Timothy Healy, president of Georgetown, increasingly embarrassed over the center's image, returned the money with a polite thank you. Hisham Sharabi, holder of the Libyans' Chair of Arab Culture, denounced Healy as a "Jesuit Zionist," but the gift went back.

THE lesson is clear. As long as American universities refuse to accept money in cases where a foreign donor's motives or respectability are plainly suspect, attempts to buy their prestige will be discouraged and kept to a minimum. If, on the other hand, academic standards come to be relaxed or waived in prospect of large financial rewards, a step will have been taken toward the complete politicization of scholarship and the transformation of the university into an ideological battleground.

Fiction

Imaginings of Africa

Pearl K. Bell

IT WOULD BE difficult to summon up a gathering of novelists more dissimilar in temperament, experience, and craft than Joseph Conrad, Evelyn Waugh, Joyce Cary, Saul Bellow, Graham Greene, and John Updike. Yet at a crucial point of their careers each of these writers was arrested by the possibilities of Africa as a fertile new locus for some of his most ambitious and unexpected work. In most cases the impetus came not from any extensive knowledge or experience of the continent, but from an idea of Africa nourished by travel, fantasy, character, and the promptings of history. Because no one of these literary images of Africa was or could be essentially like another, there are as many different Africas in Western fiction as there have been writers who created them.

Behind this diversity of novelists' Africas is an obvious fact; the so-called Dark Continent (a ludicrous misnomer for a place scorched by the tropical sun) contains a dizzying heterogeneity of religions, races, languages, dialects, tribal forms, cultures, governments, and levels of social and economic development. To Western literary eyes, so great a variety of perceptible realities paradoxically enhances the vision of primitive Africa as an exotic chimera, a mystery that can yield whatever dramatic or moral secrets one hopes to discover in its depths. Conrad looked to Africa for the horrors of the imperial Congo, Waugh for the absurdities of *Black*

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Mischief, Bellow for the anthropological comedy of *Henderson the Rain King*, Greene for the tragic consequences of pity and guilt in *The Heart of the Matter*. It was Greene who, in *Journey Without Maps*, remembering his first of many visits to Africa, shrewdly perceived in the fascination of white writers and explorers with the heart of darkness the lure of psychic rejuvenation, of returning, in the place where man was born, to "those ancestral threads" of the unconscious mind that would enable them "to go back and begin again," to cast off the constraints of civilization and enact to the fullest their sensual fantasies of terror, power, and domination.

Yet even those Western novelists for whom Africa has been a more familiar and mundane reality have tended to use the continent as a foil for their alien obsessions and prejudices. The Anglo-Irish novelist Joyce Cary knew his colonial corner of Africa as a haughty traveler like Waugh could never hope (or want) to do; he went to Nigeria as a political officer in 1914, fought with a Nigerian regiment in the Cameroons during the war, lived for months at a time in the barbaric isolation of the bush, and did not go home to stay until 1920. But when he began to write the four African novels that were eventually published in the 30's, he portrayed the place and the people he had known with such intimate affection mainly as the colonial overlord sent there to impose some civilized decency and order on the lovably childlike and maddening natives. Of course Cary's Africa is more literally faithful than Waugh's or Conrad's, but the condescension of the imperial administrator whose presence derives from political imperatives is unmistakable even in Cary's African masterpiece, *Mister Johnson*.

MANY years and many political metamorphoses later, John Updike briefly toured central Africa, in 1973, under the auspices of that global impresario of American culture, the United States Information Agency. And just as he defied conventional expectations by writing his first novel, *The Poorhouse Fair*, about the very old instead of the very young, he has elected to write *his* novel of Africa not in the white man's voice but ostensibly from within the skin, heart, rage, and aggrieved racial passion of a black African dictator committed to "the pure and final socialism envisioned by Marx, the theocratic populism of Islam's periodic reform movements." Not a moment too soon, Updike has ceased his repetitive scrutiny of suburban adultery, and out of his nimble and well-researched imagination has drawn the remarkable figure of Colonel Hakim Félix Ellelloû of Kush, a miserably poor, backward, peanut-growing, landlocked sub-Saharan immensity that its one-time French rulers, with Gallic neatness, called Noire.

Updike has had the audacious idea of presenting *The Coup** as the memoir of Ellelloû's rise and fall, which he is writing in 1973 from exile in the south of France. Toppled from the Presidency of Kush by the crafty Minister of the Interior, who had secretly negotiated with Washington for American money and technology, Ellelloû reconstructs his life and the fiery devotions that have driven him—ideological, political, religious, and sexual. But if the voice is Esau's, the hand is Jacob's, for the manner, if not the matter, of Ellelloû's memoir is pure Updike, uninhibited in its lapidary ornateness. This black African child of rape, who was raised in a tribe of Western Noire and fought with the French colonial army in Indochina, meditates in tropes that are relentlessly literary, festooned with orotund metaphoric baubles spun from "a rapture of abandonment to the furious wind within him." Though Ellelloû encrusts his paragraphs with lengthy quotations from the Koran and claims to despise everything about America, "that fountainhead of obscenity and glut," he sounds like a stylishly eloquent product of the Ivy League. Recounting the terrible day when he personally beheaded the corrupt and wily old king whom he dethroned during *L'Emergence* (the revolution of 1968 which brought the dictator to power), he says that as he plunged the scimitar into the withered neck, "My mind in its exalted, distended condition had time to entertain many irrelevant images"—of Plato's cave, an orange, candy apples at Wisconsin fairs. Even the Western novelist who struggles to write, as it were, in blackface cannot close the gap between his alien sensibility and the obdurate reality of Africa.

Those candy apples are explained later on, in one of Updike's most whimsical detours, for it turns out that Ellelloû, after deserting from the French army in the early 50's, made his way to the American heartland, where he spent four years at McCarthy College, in Franchise, Wisconsin. Just how he managed this incredible migration is unclear, but Ellelloû's American interlude provides Updike with a feast of satiric targets from that vanished time of greedy innocence, when "everything in America . . . seemed to this interloper fat, abundant, and bubble-like, from the fenders of the cars to the cranium of the President." Repelled and amused by the bloated confidence of this strange world, Ellelloû returned to Noire with an American wife named Candy ("one of those white women who cannot leave black men alone") and the violent Black Muslim preaching of Elijah Muhammed engraved on his soul. Where and how he was converted to Marxism remains vague, but it conveniently accounts for the presence in Kush, despite Ellelloû's contempt for "superparanoid" materialism and technology, of a Russian-manned underground ICBM base whose weapons point north to similar American installations in a neighboring "harlot" country. He could not love Russia half so much had he not loathed the U.S. more.

TO ELLELLOÛ'S Islamic ferocity, America is the infidel that must be kept at bay, and he is fanatically determined, as dictator and self-proclaimed spiritual savior of his beloved country, all but destroyed by a five-year drought, to defend its "delicate, delectable emptiness" against the stealthy American temptations of consumerism, pollution, ranch houses, upward mobility, and a McDonald's on every corner. But

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America will not leave him or Kush alone. To feed the starving citizens of the drought-stricken country, USAID flies a cardboard mountain of Kix, Trix, condensed milk, condensed cream-of-celery soup, condensed everything to Kush—which has no water. Ellelloû indignantly turns down the "carcinogenic trash" donated by "a society both godless and oppressive." At his order the philanthropic cornucopia is torched, incinerating not only the food but one Donald Gibbs, the Foreign Service boob who accompanied the bounty to Kush. He is Ellelloû's sacrificial offering to the holy dream of a land uncontaminated by Big Macs and "atheistic pluralism." But in doing this Ellelloû lights the fuse of his own downfall. When a State Department bigwig (named Klipspringer) seizes upon Gibbs's disappearance to insinuate himself into the political affairs of Kush, the dictator takes off on a quixotic trek, via Mercedes and camel, across the northern desert. His shifty minister, Ezana, a secret convert to Western ideals and an adroit student of what his boss calls "the slime of *Realpolitik*," opens the gates wide to the foes bearing gifts.

UNFORTUNATELY, the stylistic triumph of *The Coup*—the brilliant description of Ellelloû's crossing of the desert, a virtuoso cadenza of heat, sand, camels, thirst, stars like "chandeliers of chandeliers"—is followed by an inept and hackneyed caricature of America the vulgar that undermines the integrity of Updike's conception. At the edge of the desert, Ellelloû stumbles upon an American-style boom town whose existence had been hidden from him, along with the oil wells and refinery that inflicted this excrescence on the beauty of Kush, and Updike spares us not a single lurid banality. But his cartoon America is glib, uninventive, devoid of the stinging wit, if not the contempt, on which Nabokov impaled the same sleazy manners and mores of Middle America. Ellelloû is seen as the tragic victim of the American juggernaut, sweeping every vestige of "natural" beauty and virtue before it as it remakes the world in its image. In *The Coup* there isn't an American—white American, at any rate—who isn't obtuse or smug or bigoted or coarse ("Don't give me that Kismet crap," says Ellelloû's American wife) or fat or "pink" like an overstuffed pig. This reliance on stereotype seems especially astonishing coming from Updike because in a number of critical essays about contemporary black African novelists he has avoided the stale clichés with admirably undogmatic intelligence. In a review of some novels by Yambo Ouologuem of Mali and Kofi Awoonor of Ghana, for example, he observed: "There is less Fanonesque fury . . . than one might expect. . . . Young Africans do not share their American brothers' sensation of a magical white omnipotence malevolently applied to ring them in. Rather, there is bewilderment at vastness, a sense of ungraspable forces and inutile liberty. . . ."

This sense of uncertainty is far more percipient and persuasive than the schematic black-and-white (in every sense) design of *The Coup*. But before anyone points a finger of rebuke at my literal-minded identification of a novelist's moral attitude with that of his imaginary character, I should make it clear that Colonel Hakim Félix Ellelloû—paranoid, sexy, lyrical, funny, fanatical, and oddly charming—is a great achievement. For this very reason Updike's irredeemably awful Americans make me all the more impatient. It scarcely needs saying that John Updike can hardly be regarded as an ideological spokesman for the Third World, yet there also can be no doubt that Ellelloû's xenophobic diatribes against the insidious power of the United States over "vast delicate nations" come straight from the offended heart of John Updike.

WHO would deny that rampant hedonism (it is hardly an American, or by now even a purely Western, monopoly) engenders greed, corruption, vulgarity? But to suggest so categorically, even allowing for the exaggeration of imaginative art, that the ethical and cultural and political "purity" of the new African nations can be preserved only at the price of impoverishment and despotism, of wholesale rejection of Western progress against hunger, disease, and repression—this is in fact a curious latter-day version of the romantic idealization of primitive life that has for centuries inspired the Western image of Africa. As the Dutch historian, Henri Baudet, has shown in his brilliant little book, *Paradise on Earth: Some Thoughts on European Images of Non-European Man*, the myth that primitive man is blessed with the uncorrupted innocence of a prelapsarian state of grace has appeared in one form or another in every era of European civilization from its earliest Mediterranean beginnings, a wistful nostalgia fed by chronic anxieties of self-doubt and inadequacy. Tracing the history of these tenacious images—Prester John, the Ethiopian Priest-King; *le bon nègre;* the American Indian as noble savage—Baudet points out that they are "not primarily if at all descriptions of real people . . . [but] an image of a mythical people, primitive children of nature inhabiting a heaven-like country beyond the seas."

What began as a kind of legendary yearning for paradise lost was in later centuries given more sophisticated literary expression by Diderot, Chateaubriand, Rousseau, de Sade, Stevenson, Hesse—"a new, polished form of the centuries-old pull of the primitive past preserved in contemporary reality." And these enduring idylls of the incorruptible purity, gentleness, simplicity of primitive man were invariably contrasted with contemporary civilized life to its detriment; held up against the primitive ideal, civilized societies and cultures seemed, to the romantic visionaries, irrationally complex, degenerate, a perversion of "natural" man. In its scornful parody of American culture, *The Coup* is clearly a descendant, a particularly simplistic descendant, of that recurrent illusion of paradise. And it will surely not be the last.

DAN JACOBSON'S new novel, *The Confessions of Josef Baisz*,* is also set in an imaginary dictatorship, the Republic of Sarmeda. Far from serving as any sort of mythical ideal, this unreal country seems to be modeled in part on Jacobson's native South

* Harper & Row, 213 pp., $10.00.

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Africa, in part on an especially dreary and repressive East European satellite of the Soviet Union. (Some of the names, to my untutored ear, sound Afrikaans; others, like Baisz, belong to Mittel-Europa.) In any case, there can be little doubt that Sarmeda, whatever the geographical and social qualities assigned to it, is meant to be a country of the mind as Updike's Kush, with its many similarities to Mali, Chad, and the other countries hacked out of French West Africa, is not. Sarmeda is a territory of bad dreams with "vaguely discerned shapes of mountains and plains"; even when the narrator, Josef Baisz, sharpens his focus on fields, wind pumps, "whitewashed farmsteads . . . each with a clump of dark trees standing sentinel around it," the lines quickly dissolve and everything seems to hover spectrally in the floating air. This "ramshackle dictatorship" exists in no atlas, and the despicable career that Josef Baisz discloses—as "bodyguard, police spy, kidnapper, murderer, and favored son of the regime"—has not been subject to unsettling actualities of place, time, and history. The only guiding landmarks of his confession are those he himself erects along the way. In contrast to the mock-*National Geographic* data (population, climate, chief product, etc.) which Updike lavishes on Kush, bleak and misty Sarmeda is bounded on all sides by a landscape without maps.

OSTENSIBLY, this confession of an unmitigated scoundrel has been smuggled out of Sarmeda and brought to England by a mysterious stranger. When apparatchiks of the Sarmedan Embassy in London learn of the document's existence, they denounce it as a counterrevolutionary pack of lies—Jacobson deftly parodies the blustering outrage of a *Pravda* editorial. Yet actually the story that this rogue proceeds to tell is far more concerned with the rot in his private soul than with the oppressive regime of Sarmeda. Born into a working-class family in a provincial town, Baisz resolves in early adolescence, after his father commits suicide, "To do better than my father. To know more about others than they knew about me." Only through cunning and duplicity will he acquire the power he craves; at each stage of his rise in the Sarmedan bureaucracy, he exults in "the bright, benign excitement of treachery."

As a young soldier he informs on his best friend, then is appointed as bodyguard to a high-ranking functionary, and is soon sleeping with his boss's wife. Like Updike's memoirist, Jacobson's provides a running commentary on his own story—austerely plain-spoken compared with Ellelloû's fanfaronade—for he appears to be anxious to account for his filthy deeds, wants us to understand that "everyone had got Judas wrong! That was my great discovery. . . . He hadn't done if for the sake of the silver. Never. He was one of those who loved only what he betrayed; who could love only through betrayal. I was another." Baisz victimizes those who trust him, because only then can he pity them, and only pity will arouse his love. Applying himself with perfect seriousness to this pursuit of love, he "accidentally" cripples the man he is cuckolding, moves on to spy for the secret police, kidnaps two children in the line of duty, and murders a troubled young man he is supposed to protect. Years later, as his unfaltering devotion to "the God of falsity and double-dealing" is about to yield the grand prize of a high ministerial post, Josef Baisz betrays his sister. Engulfed in self-pity, he becomes "the last and most innocent of all my victims," and will shoot himself as soon as he lays down his pen.

WHAT are we to make of this parable, if it is indeed meant to be read as a parable? This question defeats me, as it did not a British reviewer of the novel, who came up with an ingenious answer: Dan Jacobson lectures at an English university; therefore *The Confessions of Joseph Baisz* is about the plight of writers who are forced to teach in "autocratic" institutions of higher learning! This reminds me of those Marxist critics who used to argue, seriously, that Fortinbras is the hero of *Hamlet* because he represents the rising middle class. What I at first, though without much confidence, assumed that Jacobson was writing about was the spirit of evil. But it is opportunism, not evil, that is the soul of Baisz, and his explanation of his motives does not in fact explain anything at all. For Kafka it was the castle, not Josef K., that was unknowable, but here it is Josef B. who is unreachable and confounding. Jacobson calls his novel "confessions," but the confessed sins seem to exist on their own, dissociated from the man who committed them. Perhaps the fact that Baisz is little more than a disembodied voice explains why such a sordid account of villainy, related with such unflinching candor, left me so untouched, unstirred by horror or disgust, or indeed by any feeling at all.

DAN JACOBSON is an intelligent and witty novelist who, unlike most writers today, is willing to take enormous risks. When he had exhausted the literary possibilities of his Jewish upbringing in South Africa, he did not try to recycle it. In retelling the grim story of King David's only daughter, in *The Rape of Tamar*, he created a *truly* malevolent narrator, Yonadab, whose reflections about politics, sex, and power had an infectious vitality. *The Wonder-Worker*, of 1974, was a haunting and disturbing account of psychosis and the madness of art. In *The Confessions of Josef Baisz*, Jacobson has gone down a mythical alley that in the end leads nowhere. He will make his way back.

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A New Patriotism?

Richard Grenier

In 1891 the children of the Beach Street Industrial School near the docks on Manhattan's lower West Side voted by secret ballot on whether or not they wanted, each morning, to salute the American flag. The children were Italian, Czech, Jewish, German, Irish, and black. The vote was 98 per cent in favor of saluting. In *The Children of the Poor,* Jacob Riis has recorded a typical morning salute, the flag carried to the principal's desk, the "little ones" rising, "grimy little hands laid on as many hearts," declaring with one voice: "We turn to our flag as the sunflower turns to the sun! We give our heads! and our hearts!" Then "with a shout that can be heard around the corner": "To our country! One country, one language, one flag." "No one can hear it," Riis says, "and doubt that the children mean every word."

This kind of ardent patriotism, rather out of fashion today, is an important strand in Michael Cimino's *The Deer Hunter.* Whatever the cause, the film seems to have hit a nerve, becoming overnight the object of the most bitter controversy, dividing critical opinion almost as sharply as did the Vietnam war which, in part, is its subject. The cleavage is not on purely ideological grounds, but the "anti-war" group, "custodian of the nation's conscience" during the war and bidding fair to become custodian of the nation's memory of the war now that it is over, is especially incensed. Gloria Emerson, winner of the National Book Award for her Vietnam work, *Winners and Losers,* considers the film an abomination. Frances FitzGerald, winner of the National Book Award, Pulitzer Prize, and Bancroft Prize for History for her Vietnam study, *Fire in the Lake,* called the movie "a fraud . . . a grade-B Western . . . wholly implausible. . . ."

The controversy has been internationalized, with American critics of the movie joined by the Soviet Union. At the West Berlin Film Festival in late February, the USSR withdrew its delegation and all its films in protest at *The Deer Hunter,* declaring it contains episodes that "insult the heroic people of Vietnam," and that this was particularly offensive now that Vietnam has become subject to a "new barbaric aggression on the part of China." Russia was followed out of the festival by the delegations of East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Cuba. At the Belgrade Film Festival, long a Third World rostrum, the Russians also protested vigorously. But there, interestingly, festival director Milutin Colic, Yugoslavia's leading film authority, rose to *The Deer Hunter*'s defense, saying it was a "very human film," a "requiem" for America's Vietnam dead, and even a "tragic anti-war picture."

The movie has its champions in the United States as well, of course, including the highly esteemed director Robert Altman. Unintimidated by the virulence of the "anti-war" group's attack, the New York Film Critics' Circle boldly gave *The Deer Hunter* its award as the best picture of 1978, and for the year's Academy Awards the picture is at the top of the listing, with nine nominations, as against eight for Jane Fonda's *Coming Home.* With all the buffoonery associated with Academy Awards, it is bizarre to think that the Oscar ceremony, which saw Jane Fonda receive an earlier award in Vietcong black pajamas, and Vanessa Redgrave recently launch a hysterical tirade against "Zionist hoodlums," may yet serve as a possible bellwether of changing American attitudes toward the whole Vietnam experience, and perhaps even a sign of the beginning of the *post*-post-Vietnam period. Then again, the vote might be decided by the unaccustomed criterion of artistic quality, which would leave political interpretations moot.

It would not be the first time a historic shift had thrown to the fore a curious standard-bearer. Director Michael Cimino has, in fact, done much to play into the hands of his adversaries. A persistent character trait seems to be a kind of *mythomanie,* a need to affirm that fictional accounts he relates are grounded in events, preferably events which in some way he himself has experienced. In an interview in the New York *Times* he claimed he had "joined the army about the time of the Tet offensive" of 1968 and was "assigned as a medic to a Green Beret unit." None of this seems to be true. He was in and out of the army (Reserve) years before Tet, and the Pentagon says his service record bears no trace of his ever having had any connection with the Green Berets. Cimino is evasive about his personal life; if some statements he has made imply his spiritual home is Brooklyn, his real home seems to be an affluent suburb, and he was educated in private schools and at Yale.

Questioned by European reporters at the Berlin Festival, Cimino said *The Deer Hunter* had "no political message." It was "just a story about people." When asked if there was any significance to his having made the heroes of his film Americans of Russian descent, he said no, he had just used what he knew; he "grew up with a Russian family." If true, it was an odd Russian family. In *The Deer Hunter*'s original

Richard Grenier, *a new contributor, has just finished his second novel. He has also written widely on the movies.*

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scenario (author: Harvard graduate Deric Washburn), the film's characters are specifically identified as Ukrainian, and some Ukrainian details remain in the film ("Lemko Hall"). But at some point in the work's artistic development—perhaps under the influence of Tolstoy, perhaps through the metaphor of Russian roulette which dominates the film—the characters became largely Russified. The family name of the hero, Mike, is "Vronsky," the name of Anna's lover in *Anna Karenina*. Cimino still refers to his creations sometimes as Ukrainians, sometimes as Russians.

The Deer Hunter announces itself very early as an ambitious movie. We are in the steel country of Western Pennsylvania. The opening sequence takes place amid the roar and flames of a steel mill. Their shift over and asbestos suits removed, five young workers leave the mill, engage in horseplay, and drive off to a local tavern run by a friend and fellow "Russian," where they drink, and sing boisterously out of tune. The leading characters are Mike (Robert de Niro), Nick (Christopher Walken), Steven (John Savage), and Stan (the late John Cazale). Cimino has said, quite accurately, that his film is about "male bonding," and the males bond quite a bit. Steven's mother comes to get him because it is time for his marriage, and the movie's following sequence gives us a Russian wedding in voluminous detail, with the Russian Orthodox ritual, and Russian dancing at the reception afterward. It is in these scenes that the film's heroic aspirations become unmistakable, as the wedding ritual and festive Russian dancing are shot with a slowness of pacing that in the context of the American commercial cinema is nothing if not audacious

After the wedding reception, the friends carouse and raise hell, in their proletarian way, but there is a serious moment. We have learned that three of the friends are bound for the army and Vietnam, and Nick, grave, says, "I love this country," and he makes Mike promise to bring his body back "if anything should happen to me over there." The day after the marriage, the friends, leaving the world of women behind, go deer hunting in the nearby Alleghenies. They bond some more. Stan, perhaps coincidentally the only one of the group to be a philanderer, and who is *not* bound for Vietnam, shows himself to be a clown and an appalling failure at deer hunting. Mike, identified as a "total-control freak," is far and away the best hunter. As Mike's figure is silhouetted against the mountainous skyline we hear an all-male chorus singing the liturgy of the Russian Orthodox Church. The whole hunt is given the aspect of a purifying ritual. Mike kills his deer with one shot. We see him again, alone against the mountains, as the Russian liturgical singing rises to a tremendous crescendo—just before a "slam" cut to Vietnam.

We are now almost halfway into a three-hour movie. At this point we have a film that recommends itself by its scope and seriousness. Its canvas is large. It has a monumental, Eisensteinian quality to it, a grandeur of shooting and montage. It concentrates on the life of blue-collar workers, but this is a life unspiced by crime or juicy sex or a disco beat—not a favorite subject of Hollywood. The film so far is also quite clearly about masculinity, an attempt to establish some kind of male ideal. It is awash with sublimated homosexuality, possibly unrecognized by its authors, but enough to have French critics class it without hesitation as *homophile*. Finally, it expresses a kind of elemental nationalism, a love of one's native place. There is a hint or two that intellectually the film may be half-baked, the product of creative talents living beyond their mental means, but it is an immensely serious effort. It does not draw back (nor will it ever draw back) from ambitious effects.

VIETNAM; tropical vegetation; the sounds of war. In the opening shots of this part of the film we see a Vietnamese in Communist uniform coldly shoot and kill an attractive young Vietnamese peasant woman and her toddler. Hidden in nearby reeds, Mike, now a Green Beret, witnesses the scene, and shortly thereafter avenges these deaths by burning the Communist to death with a flame-thrower. In a coincidence of war, Mike's two hometown friends, Nick and Steven, attached to a unit of the regular infantry, arrive on the scene by helicopter. There is an abrupt military reversal and all three friends are taken prisoner together. Their Vietcong captors, who are portrayed as relentlessly vicious, treat their prisoners with great cruelty. They put them in cages, with rats, and the cages are sometimes almost submerged in water with the captives barely able to breathe. Above all the Vietcong torment their prisoners by forcing them to play Russian roulette, betting gleefully on the outcome, on the life or death of the American prisoners. There are extended scenes of great tension, with Mike, Nick, and Steven in turn pointing the pistol at their own temples, faces working. Mike, predictably, is the toughest, and by a feat of *sang froid* and daring succeeds in freeing himself and his friends, although the three are split up in the escape and each goes his separate way. This is the end of the film's "combat" section.

But once the motif of Russian roulette is introduced, it takes over the plot entirely. Shortly afterward, while recuperating from a wound at an Army hospital, Nick is wandering the back streets of Saigon. Fleeing in revulsion the room of a Vietnamese prostitute, he encounters a worldly Frenchman ("A man who say no to champagne, say no to life"). The Frenchman leads him to a clandestine gambling casino the size of a provincial American sports arena, with grandstands, where Vietnamese are feverishly and very noisily betting on the outcome of matches of—Russian roulette. Sitting in the grandstand, unseen by Nick, is Mike. (Despite extensive questioning I have been unable to find anyone who, directly or indirectly, has ever heard of such a gambling institution in Vietnam, or indeed anywhere else. Nor have I been able to uncover any record or tale of Vietcong or North Vietna-

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mese soldiers inflicting Russian-roulette torment on prisoners. Cimino, who has never been to Vietnam, says he was "told" at least part of the story by an unidentified informant, although at other moments he has admitted that his film is "not realistic.")

In *The Deer Hunter*, in any event, Nick is strongly attracted to this Russian roulette—so strongly attracted, in fact, that he deserts from the army and takes up a career as an active participant in the game. Russian roulette apparently attracts Mike too, if only as a spectator and bettor, but oddly he never succeeds in making contact with his old friend. Here the story sweeps ahead. We see Mike, lavishly ornamented with both military decorations and sergeant's stripes, returning on home leave to Pennsylvania. He looks up Nick's old girl friend, Linda (Meryl Streep). She pleads, "Can't we comfort each other?" He comforts her without much enthusiasm. He also visits in the hospital the third of the three friends who went to Vietnam, Steven, who has lost an arm and both legs. Astonishingly, Steven has, stuffed into a drawer by his hospital bed, thousands and thousands of dollars which have been arriving from an unknown source. Mike senses that they have been sent by Nick who, although the chance of death is one in six at each go-around, has been playing Russian roulette all these years (it is now 1975 and Saigon is about to fall), beating the rather imposing odds and sending the proceeds to his crippled buddy.

Another "slam" cut. We are on the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon. Panic. The evacuation is on. Most people seem anxious to leave, yet Green Beret Sergeant Vronsky flies not out, but in, carrying a clothing bag over his shoulder. We see him in civilian clothes in the streets of Saigon, where he finds the same decadent, champagne-loving Frenchman we have met before, getting into his convertible to flee. By pressing thousands of dollars upon this Frenchman and others, Mike finds his way by boat along the river to a sports arena where a crowd of monied Vietnamese, impassioned and noisy as ever, remarkably oblivious to the approach of Communist military units, is engaging in its favorite pastime, betting on Russian roulette. The star contestant is Nick, haggard, near-catatonic, his arm covered with heroin tracks. Mike has come to his rescue, but Nick doesn't recognize him. To shock him into recognition, Mike takes a seat in the pit of the gambling hall as Nick's opponent in a match. The two white men are cheered on by a crowd of rabid Vietnamese. *"Is this what you want?"* shouts Mike, placing the revolver to his head. *"I love you!"* he cries, and pulls the trigger. Click. He lives. It is now Nick's turn. His face works. The light of something remembered comes into his eyes just before he pulls the trigger of his revolver. But there is an explosion and he falls dead. Mike rushes to him, clutching him in his arms and sobbing, *"I love you!"* Cut to Nick's funeral at the Russian Orthodox church back in Pennsylvania. Mike has kept his promise and brought Nick back to the land he loved. After the funeral, in the film's closing scene, the five surviving friends gather, plus Nick's old girl friend and the wife of the crippled Steven, and, out of tune but much moved, sing "God Bless America."

THE whole second half of *The Deer Hunter* has little claim to realism. One wonders how many men, tortured by being forced to play Russian roulette in captivity, would develop a taste for it and, neurotic or not, engage in it voluntarily once free. In addition, one is asked to believe that: playing Russian roulette nightly, or even weekly, a man could survive for years; an army sergeant would have the political clout to fly into the U.S. Embassy in Saigon at the peak of the evacuation; large-scale gambling on Russian roulette would continue with Saigon in full collapse; the sergeant could get his friend's body out during the same frantic evacuation in order to be buried in Pennsylvania. The list could be extended. (I am reminded of a film-maker in *Real Life*, a recent movie by Albert Brooks, who, seeking his way out of a plotting dilemma, cheerfully suggests to himself "Start real, end fake! What are they going to do, send me to movie jail?")

And what is one to think of the elephantine symbol of Russian roulette that, once having made its appearance, so devours the plot of *The Deer Hunter*, and for which so much naturalistic plausibility is sacrificed? It is clearly intended to serve as a symbol and perhaps parable of war. But just how rich is this symbol? How much light does it shed? In Russian roulette, as in war, one can get killed, and one can not get killed. Russian roulette has an aspect of bravado, as does war. So far, so good. Now Russian roulette is usually engaged in voluntarily. Is war voluntary? This depends on whether we are speaking of individuals or of states, and in either case the answer is not clear-cut. Wars vary, as do individuals. Russian roulette has no useful social purpose, is pursued for "sport." Does war have a useful purpose? Once again, there are varying interpretations of varying wars. More to the point, then, did the Vietnam war have a useful social purpose? What does Michael Cimino think? My own feeling is that Cimino is not really much concerned with the rights and wrongs of why we were in Vietnam, and to draw a conclusion on this point from his symbolism would be squeezing more out of it than it contains. But the main reason this symbol is so frustrating is that war, after all, is aggression directed against others. Russian roulette is directed against the self.

But Russian roulette is bad, at least. Is war bad? Those who believe, as many do, that *The Deer Hunter* is a "peace" movie must base their case on a conviction that Cimino, with his Russian roulette or however, has at the very least shown us that war is terrible. My view is that nobody who adulates—as Cimino obviously does—the courage and strength and military *vertu* of our Green Beret, our "total-control freak," our "deer hunter," can think wars are anything like all bad (any more than Sir Thomas Mallory could have thought the fighting in *Le Morte d'Arthur* was all bad, or, indeed,

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bad at all). I have no doubt whatsoever that whether we were right or wrong to be in Vietnam, Michael Cimino wanted us to win there, as he wants us to win everywhere.

The Deer Hunter, then, is imbued with a kind of primary patriotism, even a florid patriotism. For Cimino, the root, the home base, of this nationalist ardor is in America's working classes, for whom America is not yet something to be taken for granted. (When the psychologically disturbed Nick is questioned in a hospital by a doctor as to whether his is a Russian name, he says, "No. It's an American name.") If the movie makes an unequivocal statement about Vietnam, it is that the war was fought by these people; when the price of being an American had to be paid, they were the ones who paid it. The film is very admiring of what it holds to be working-class strength and vitality, at least that of white Americans of "ethnic" stock. Even early in the film, and before I knew anything of Cimino personally, I suspected it was made by a person of affluent background who was something of a "proletarian groupie." I now find Cimino once told a reporter: "Those guys were so alive. When I was fifteen I spent three weeks driving all over Brooklyn with a guy who was following his girl friend. He was convinced she was cheating on him, and he had a gun, and if she was, he was going to kill her. There was such passion and intensity about their lives. When the rich kids got together, the most we ever did was cross against a red light." He is clearly also a military groupie, a Green Beret groupie, and something of a xenophobe. The "Frenchman" in the movie is a caricature, and except for the woman and child who get killed immediately, all Vietnamese of all political persuasions are shown in a decidedly unattractive light.

To JUDGE by the surprisingly strong positive reaction to *The Deer Hunter*, the ardent patriotism it expresses is not so dead a commodity in today's America as some might have thought. But as for Cimino himself, one may be permitted to speculate how deeply his own feelings run on this matter—whether, like the grimy children at the Beach Street Industrial School, he "means every word." I confess I have my suspicions. I find his flavor, indeed, somewhat reminiscent of those leading lights of the French entertainment world who in 1939 wrapped themselves so ostentatiously in the *tricolore*, only to rally instantly to the Nazi banner when France collapsed in 1940. It turned out that, more than France, what they loved most was force, power, *le côté de la crosse*. In Cimino's case, on an even deeper level in his film than its patriotism is its "male bonding." Consistent, the director is now embarked on his next project, *The Johnson County War*, which begins, not with a Russian wedding, but with a "traditional" post-graduation orgy at Harvard in 1871 (Cimino says it is based on "research"). After the orgy, Kris Kristofferson leaves behind him Harvard, city softness, and women, and heads for the pure air of Montana and the land of men.

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Books in Review

Self & Society

THE CULTURE OF NARCISSISM: AMERICAN LIFE IN AN AGE OF DIMINISHING EXPECTATIONS. By CHRISTOPHER LASCH. *Norton. 268 pp. $11.95.*

Reviewed by KENNETH S. LYNN

WHO lost America? It wasn't the Left's fault, replies Christopher Lasch in his apocalyptic new book, *The Culture of Narcissism*. For more than fifty years, radical intellectuals in this country have done their best to discredit "the authoritarian family, repressive sexual morality, literary censorship, the work ethic, and other foundations of bourgeois order." But if those foundations are now collapsing, and Mr. Lasch is quite sure that they are, the bourgeoisie has no one but itself to blame. It is not the triumph of cultural radicalism, the author assures us, but a stunning transformation in the character of bourgeois individualism that is the key to the cultural crisis of our time. The severely repressed, morally rigid "economic man" of yesteryear—that fervent defender of time-hallowed customs and institutions whom J. P. Marquand gently satirized in *The Late George Apley*—has given way to an anxiety-ridden character out of Joan Didion's *Play It As It Lays*, who "acts out" his impulses in a desperate quest for a meaningful life. Instead of enforcing restrictions on personal freedom, as his puritanical ancestors did, the permissive American of today tries to get rid of them. The temple of bourgeois values is therefore being destroyed by the very class that built it. To the "psychological man" of contemporary America, immediate self-gratification is the only god worth serving.

According to Mr. Lasch, the shift toward "psychological man" originated in the gradual assumption of childrearing functions by surrogate authorities responsible to the state, to private industry, or to their own codes of professional ethics. "In the course of bringing culture to the masses, the advertising industry, the mass media, the health and welfare services, and other agencies of mass tuition took over many of the socializing functions of the home and brought the ones that remained under the direction of modern science and technology." These developments profoundly affected the patterns of familial intimacy, and the altered structure of parent-child relations eventually worked a change in the structure of American personality. "On the principle that pathology represents a heightened version of normality," Mr. Lasch argues that we can most clearly appreciate what has happened to us by reading through the growing literature on "pathological narcissism." In the symptom constellations and character disorders of certain kinds of mental patients we can see the image, as in a cracked glass, darkly, of an entire nation's narcissism. If our "way of life . . . is dying," it is not merely because of the objective contradictions of advanced capitalism—economic stagnation, the impending exhaustion of natural resources, and the like—but because we ourselves, as individuals, are sick.

Mr. Lasch brings to this bold argument a wide acquaintance with the very best authorities on narcissistic illnesses, from Freud to Melanie Klein to a host of more recent specialists, including Otto Kernberg, Heinz Kohut, Warren Brodey, and Peter Giovacchini. That Mr. Lasch understands what he has read is apparent in the mini-essays he gives us in his book on such topics as "Narcissism, Schizophrenia, and the Family" and "Narcissism and the 'Absent Father.'" Popularizations in the best sense of the word, these lucid resumés of a difficult science remind us of what the magazine *Psychology Today* might have become had it not descended into sensationalism. Mr. Lasch's erudition also makes him a perceptive critic of other popularizers of psychiatric modes of thought, as well as a devastating commentator on such deplorable fads of the day as the "new consciousness movement," which in effect advises people not to make too large an investment in love and friendship, to avoid excessive dependence on others, and to live for the moment. In a passage which seems to me definitive, Mr. Lasch diagnoses this advice as simply a reinforcement of the emotional malaise which gave rise to the consciousness movement in the first place.

Yet at the same time that he has profitably gone to school to the psychiatrists, Mr. Lasch seems to have all but forgotten that he was formally trained as a historian. I am going to argue, he says, that changes in the patterns of domestic intimacy occurred over a period of several generations, but the argument he makes is far more a matter of assertion than demonstration. He does not take us into the lives of representative American families, or indeed into the life of any family, in the era prior to the appearance of surrogate authorities on childrearing, and prove to us by specific example that mothers and fathers used to have confidence in themselves as parents and that they communicated that self-confidence to their children. Nor does he take us into representative American homes one, two, and three generations later and show us how parent-child relations changed, as he claims they did, and how those changes enhanced the growth of narcissistic traits in their offspring. In lieu of family history, he gives us a series of random comments about social reformers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries who were professionally interested in children's welfare. But the reformers' claims to expertise do not come close to being a proof that American parents were progressively devaluing themselves, or that their

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children's personality structures were changing.

HAVING failed to produce solid evidence, Mr. Lasch is finally forced to turn to a quotation from the ineffable Geoffrey Gorer, whose book, *The American People* (1948), bears the same relation to the study of our national character as Velikovsky's *Worlds in Collision* does to astrophysical research. The American mother, declares Mr. Lasch, quoting Mr. Gorer, has come to depend so heavily on experts that she "can never have the easy, almost unconscious, self-assurance of the mother of more patterned societies, who is following ways she knows unquestioningly to be right." Like most of Mr. Gorer's airy assertions, the statement carries no ballast—which is why Mr. Lasch immediately calls on a supporting witness. According to this observer, the "immature, narcissistic" American mother "is so barren of spontaneous manifestation of maternal feelings" that she "studies vigilantly all the new methods of upbringing and reads treatises about physical and mental hygiene." She acts not on her own feelings or judgment, but on the "picture of what a good mother should be." Now, Mr. Lasch may not be a diligent historian, but he is not without cleverness, and he handles these remarks so as to make them appear to be another sweeping comment upon modern American mothers and thus a confirmation of Mr. Gorer's generalization. But in fact, the remarks are narrowly targeted. Drawn from a 1949 article in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, they refer only to the mothers of a small cluster of children whose psychological development had not been typically American, as the very title of the article indicates—"Adaptation of the Psychoanalytical Technique for the Treatment of Young Children with Atypical Development."

Mr. Lasch also fails to point out that the mothers in what Mr. Gorer calls "more patterned societies" did not raise their babies without plenty of advice from members of their extended families. Whether they lived in medieval Europe or in the islands of the South Pacific in Margaret Mead's time, these mothers did not go it alone. Much the same thing may be said of the mothers of early 19th-century America, as the biographical literature of the period makes clear. In a society largely made up of towns and villages, American mothers relied on the readily accessible wisdom of relatives and neighbors, as well as of the family doctor.

Mothers who raised their children with the help of John B. Watson in the 1920's, or of Arnold Gesell in the 1930's, or of Benjamin Spock and T. Berry Brazelton in more recent decades, did so partly because urbanization had made traditional sources of know-how less available. Some of these mothers,

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we can be sure, were also haunted by a distrust of their own instincts, like the women described in the psychiatric journal article cited by Mr. Lasch, and their surrender to the dictates of the pediatric manuals may well have disabled them further. But how large a percentage of the total did they constitute? How many other mothers in the last sixty years have set just as high an evaluation on their maternal talents as their counterparts did a century ago? How many, indeed, have been so strengthened by their faith in the efficacy of modern medicine and the wisdom of pediatric science that their confidence in their childbearing ability has surpassed that of all previous generations of American mothers? Confronting and disposing of these questions are absolutely essential to the credibility of *The Culture of Narcissism*, but the author acts as if they did not even exist. With a dogmatism so insistent that it comes across as anguish, Mr. Lasch proclaims that the habit of relying on outside experts can only be interpreted as destructive of "parents' confidence in their ability to perform the most elementary functions of childrearing," and hence destructive of the capacity of their children "to form strong psychological identifications with their parents."

SIFTING through the "wreckage" of American civilization in the 1970's, Mr. Lasch sees one sign of a new and better life. A growing distrust of experts and of governmental bureaucracies has led men and women "in small towns and crowded urban neighborhoods, even in suburbs," to initiate decentralized experiments in cooperation which possibly signify "the beginnings of a general political revolt." Most observers regard grass-roots disenchantment with big government as a conservative force in contemporary American politics, but Mr. Lasch prefers the ancient dream of the Left: deep down, "the people" of this nation really don't like capitalism, and eventually they will revolt against it.

The rest of Mr. Lasch's report on the current state of the Union consists entirely of denials that there is anything worthwhile going on. Thus he derides the idea that the rise of new religious cults and the swelling attendance at traditional churches augur another "Great Awakening" of piety. "The contemporary climate is therapeutic, not religious," he avers. "People today hunger not for personal salvation, . . . but for the feeling, the momentary illusion, of personal well-being, health, and psychic security." But as the thinness of his footnotes reveals, Mr. Lasch has not earned the right to speak in a tone of pontifical authority on these matters. His scornful dismissal of the spiritual content of religious revivalism in the 1970's is simply an impertinence—an impertinence, I might add, which does not even have the saving grace of humor. Unlike H. L. Mencken, Mr. Lasch is an anti-cleric who never makes us laugh.

The chapters in *The Culture of Narcissism* on the "new illiteracy" in our schools and on the "degradation" of American sports are full of troubling facts. Yet the facts are as familiar to us as the news magazines and pop-sociology books from which the author seems to have gleaned them. What one wants from Mr. Lasch is not another rehearsal of current events, but an explanation of them. Once again, however, he is content to let polemicism substitute for serious analysis. To say, for instance, that our schools have been shaped in the image of our narcissism is profitless when the charge that we are narcissistic has not been proved in the first place.

Throughout his book, Mr. Lasch expresses a vivid contempt for what he calls "the privileged classes." Thus in his discussion of American universities he observes that "Mass education, which began as a promising attempt to democratize the higher culture of the privileged classes, has ended by stupefying the privileged themselves." As an example, he cites a group of Ivy League undergraduates who had never heard of the Oedipus complex and did not know who Oedipus was. I, too, am appalled by those students. Yet *The Culture of Narcissism* contains other examples of the stupefaction of the privileged classes which bother me even more, namely, the sloppy mistakes of the middle-aged professor who wrote the book. He refers to T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" as *The Wasteland* and to Wagner's Bayreuth as Beyreuth. He garbles Vince Lombardi's famous remark about winning being the only thing and then describes it as "George Allen's dictum." General Douglas MacArthur is quoted as saying that "Upon the fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds which, on other days, on other fields, will bear the seeds of victory," whereas MacArthur actually said, "Upon the fields of friendly strife, are sown the seeds that, upon other fields on other days, will bear the fruits of victory." If these mistakes had been made by another professor and Mr. Lasch had had the wit to recognize them, our apocalyptic author would have seized on them as further evidence that America is in the death grip of bourgeois narcissism. To me, they stand for something else—the inability of Christopher Lasch and other writers on the Left to recognize their own contribution to the destruction of cultural standards.

Among the Nations

WANDERINGS: CHAIM POTOK'S HISTORY OF THE JEWS. By CHAIM POTOK. *Knopf. 398 pp. $17.95.*

Reviewed by ERICH ISAAC

THIS history of the Jews is beautifully produced, with marvellous illustrations. The novelist's hand is evident in the flow of the narrative and the often felicitous turns of phrase. Despite the fact that it is not the work of a historian, it is sophisticated and judicious in its use of professional sources. Yet as the title makes clear, this is meant as a personal history, and its personal character is emphasized through the deliberate intrusion of the author into the narrative. Here, for example, is Potok on Rome: "I see her through my Jewish eyes; I have no love for

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Rome. Of all the peoples of her vast empire she understood the Jews least." On Islam:

> When I was very young I was told by a white bearded man I revered that Muslims were desert barbarians who had somehow stumbled upon the God of our fathers and had taken Him for themselves, distorting His worship to suit their whims. This man, gentle and very old, was deeply pious and sealed within the world of Torah. Beyond that world lay the poison fruit of alien civilizations. How easily we label unknown worlds barbaric. Everyone is a barbarian to someone.

This sort of thing has a purpose: to help Potok formulate a perspective on Jewish history, and especially—as the two quotations above suggest—on the Jewish confrontation with other cultures and civilizations. Yet considered as history, the volume never makes its thesis clear. And considered as personal history, it never makes clear how Potok's own faith has been reshaped, as he says it has been, by his encounter with non-Jewish, particularly Eastern, cultures.

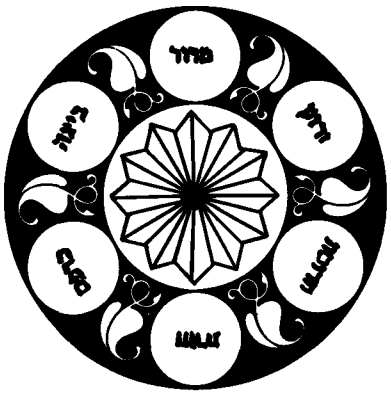
The title, *Wanderings,* is suggestive of a perspective. Wanderings normally lack direction; they are not pilgrimages but random movements, perhaps searches for something whose exact location is elusive. The Church Fathers saw Jewish wandering as a punishment; the same notion was widespread among Jews, though they had a different notion of what they were being punished for. But despite the title and the frequent repetition of the idea in the book, I do not think that Potok's central thesis is that the Jews are a wandering people. Indeed, the book reveals the extent to which Jews in the last two thousand years have been at home in various civilizations and made efforts to remain where they have settled, often long beyond the time when it would have been wise for them to move.

THERE is another problem with finding this book's perspective. It is possible to come away from Potok's narrative with a clear impression of the fabulous achievements of Sumer and Akkad, Egypt and Persia, Greece and Rome, Christendom and Islam, and also of what Potok calls "modern paganism"—all the civilizations through which the Jews have passed—but without any real understanding of what the Jewish role in these civilizations has been. Potok's volume leaves one with the sense that even Christianity and Islam, in all but their earliest stages, show little or no trace of Jewish influence.

Why should this be so? According to Potok: "The central idea of biblical civilization was the covenant . . . the central idea of rabbinic civilization was the Messiah." In his book, the covenantal idea is fully discussed; its roots in the pre-Hebrew world are analyzed in detail, and the transformation of the covenant idea in Judaism is lucidly described. No such treatment, however, is accorded to the messianic strain in Judaism—precisely that element in Jewish thought and life which perhaps has made the greatest impact on others, and whose influence continues to be felt to this day.

While one can only speculate as to why Potok should have devoted so much less attention to messianism than to the covenant idea, one reason may be that there exists a large specialist literature on Middle Eastern covenants while the origins of the messianic idea in Israel are shrouded in fog. In general, historical information about the Second Temple period has many gaps. We know next to nothing about the Persian period after Ezra and Nehemiah, practically nothing about the transition to Greek rule and the Greek period itself. With the Maccabees the documentation is better but still not good. Yet it is this period that saw the beginnings of an apocalyptic and messianic literature. Like the Pharisees and Sadducees, who suddenly appear as fully defined groups, messianic doctrines at the time of their first known literary expressions are well developed.

But whatever their antecedents, these ideas were a factor of first importance, both in national resistance to the declining cultural paganism of the Greco-Roman world and in the attraction Judaism ex-



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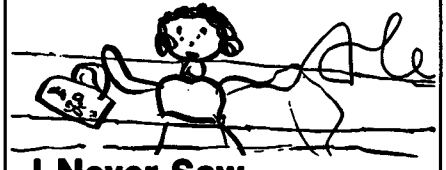

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Outnumbered by the Roman legions, the Jews had but one hope. His name was Simon.

erted upon Gentiles in this period. It was, of course, Christianity that ultimately capitalized on the enormous power of the messianic idea. Although Potok might have found it difficult to discuss the roots of the concept, he might well have described the subsequent transmutation of Jewish messianic and apocalyptic expectations into their Christian and Muslim versions and their continuation in chiliastic, millenarian, and modern secular garb.

For this reader there are also difficulties with Potok's division of Jewish history into two chronological civilizations, separated by the destruction of the Second Temple. Potok never defines what he means by a Jewish civilization. He says only that the central idea of the first is the covenant; of the second, messianism. But this is to say both too much and too little. It is too much because messianism predates rabbinic Judaism and because the covenant remained a central idea even after the maturation of the messianic concept. It is too little because a definition of Jewish civilization in terms of these two themes alone is oversimplified. The true distinctiveness of Jewish civilization both before and after the destruction of sovereignty lay in Jewish religious law and in the life that it shaped—biblical law in the first instance, rabbinic law in the second. Yet about this element of key importance Potok has relatively little to say. Furthermore, if one is talking about civilizations, perhaps a distinction of another kind should be made between the Jewish culture that grew up under Islam and the Jewish culture that grew up under Christianity. May not these be different enough to be considered separate Jewish civilizations?

At the end we are told that a third civilization of the Jews may be at hand. In Potok's diagnosis, today "everything seems to be in fragments: Judaism, Christendom, socialism, the secular dream . . . it is all in pieces around us." But there is also renewal, "a troubled springtime for the Jewish people in the United States and Israel. . . ." American Jews, together with Israel, will succeed in creating a third civilization: "We will renew our people." The reader may be forgiven a certain skepticism on this point. Jews historically have been able to create for themselves images of their host societies which accord with their own specific identities and expectations. They did it in France, in Germany, in Italy, to name but a few places. At this time, toward the end of a terrible century, it appears a specifically American Jewish habit to glide from an appreciation of the distinctive and receptive elements of American society and culture to an implicit foreclosure of negative developments which despite all due vigilance may prove impossible to arrest.

Potok glancingly touches on an agenda for the third civilization of the Jews, including a new literature, art, philosophy, and sense of community. But as he makes abundantly clear, Jewish art and literature in the first civilization were a function of the great cultural creativity of the ancient world, while Jewish art in the second civilization was Jewish only in content, its form reflecting the artistic conventions of the great civilizations enfolding the Jews. Even Jewish philosophy was a subspecies of the dominant schools, from Kalam to Thomism to the Orthodox Hegelians and Kantians of modern times. It is, to repeat, in law that Jews have shown their major originality and creativity, and it is hard to imagine a new Jewish civilization not built upon a new development of law. Yet there is no sign of this in the Diaspora, and very little of it in Israel.

It would be possible to reverse the upbeat prophecies of Potok's final paragraph, in which he affirms his faith in the renewal of the Jewish people. The Jew is not solidly inside the affairs of the world. What surrounds him is a fresh wave of hate that has managed to encompass much of the so-called Third World, whole areas of the globe that never concerned themselves with Jews before. If, as Potok says, there will nevertheless be peace and renewal for Israel, the day seems as far distant now as it has ever been.

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St. Petersburg to Paris

THE THREE WORLDS OF LEONID. By LEONID BERMAN. Translated from the French by OLIVIER BERNIER. Preface by VIRGIL THOMSON. *Basic Books. 275 pp. $13.95.*

Reviewed by HILTON KRAMER

THESE memoirs ought to have made melancholy reading. Leonid Berman was born into the doomed Jewish bourgeoisie of St. Petersburg twenty-one years before the revolution of 1917. He was thus one of the many who lost "everything" in that conflict, which made him a permanent exile from his homeland. Even when, after establishing himself abroad, he succeeded in becoming an artist—using the single name Leonid to avoid confusion with his older and more successful brother Eugene Berman, who was also a painter—he achieved at best a modest fame. In heavyweight art circles in Paris in the 1930's, he was anything but a figure to reckon with. (It was mainly the Americans who bought his pictures.) Most ominously of all, he fell captive to the German army in occupied France during World War II.

Yet *The Three Worlds of Leonid* —the volume of memoirs he completed before his death in 1976—is anything but melancholy. It is, on the contrary, a book suffused with the spirit of human happiness. Without any temptation to blink at the suffering he had observed, and sometimes himself endured, in a life more eventful then most modern painters,' Leonid nonetheless remained a man with a remarkable gift for self-renewal and a positive vocation for *le bonheur*. "I have inherited my mother's looks and my father's good temper; I am healthy in body and mind, and perfectly happy," he tells us straightaway. "I forget all past miseries and live in peace with myself, never wishing I were Rockefeller, Piero della Francesca, the handsomest man in the world, or anyone else."

This uncommon disposition turns out to have been Leonid's guardian angel not only through the travails of revolution and war but in his relations with family, friends, and lovers. About all of these he writes with a delicacy, an affection, and a geniality that are the very obverse of what we have come to expect from the "confessions" of artistic personalities. His many amatory adventures, including a homosexual episode with Christian (Bébé) Bérard, are recounted with a mixture of irony and sweetness that has all but disappeared from contemporary chronicles of sexual experience. The result is a book that is rather old-fashioned in its gentle manners. There are no scores to be settled, and no villains to be scourged.

The three worlds of the title are the worlds of the author's childhood and youth in St. Petersburg, his life as a man and aspiring artist in France in the period after 1919, and his experience of the war in occupied France. It is naturally the first and second of these that particularly lend themselves to a tone of sweet reminiscence. The lost world of Leonid's St. Petersburg childhood is by far the most vivid part of the book, and his description of it also helps to explain—even if inadvertently, for he is not much given to making such connections—the materials he was later drawn to as a painter.

"Our apartment's decoration was the epitome of bourgeois bad taste," he writes of his home on Great Stables Street in St. Petersburg. "We had five high-ceilinged rooms, very clean and as silent as the grave. There are three things about the entrance hall that have remained graven in my memory: an enormous stuffed bear serving as an umbrella holder, a large dark closet in which I was locked up twice for being disobedient . . . and finally a large papier-mâché mechanical toy, a Pierrot sitting on the edge of a well. When wound up Pierrot would sing *'Au Clair de la Lune'*; while his head and eyes began to move, his hands seemed to pluck at the strings of his mandolin, and the moon's wide face appeared in an opening of a tower."

Although this home and the even grander one Leonid occupied when, after the death of his father, his

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HILTON KRAMER *is art critic of the New York* Times *and the author of* The Age of the Avant-Garde.

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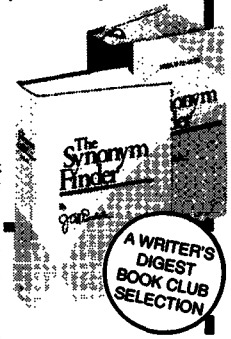

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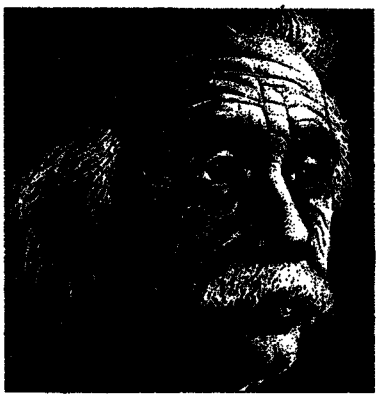
mother remarried—both her husbands were bankers—are described without a trace of bitterness or resentment, one can understand why it was, when he became a painter, he made a specialty of open vistas of water, unbounded space, and sun-drenched light. In Leonid's gentle evocations of a dreamlike waterscape, one had never suspected there might be an element of personal rebellion, but his memoirs suggest that there was.

It was, in any case, from the overupholstered comforts of his childhood and youth that the revolution uprooted him. Even so, Leonid recounts his experience of the revolution and the flight to Finland with a comic detachment, and does not hesitate to admit that for him it was at times something of a holiday. "In Helsinki, waiting for a cargo ship, I found myself once again in a lively and cheerful city, full of open-air cafés. . . . I met an officer's wife who had a weakness for me and left me with an unpleasant souvenir." It is in this spirit that he describes the collapse of his first "world" in 1919.

IT WAS in Paris that Leonid became a painter. Yet the exigent ideas of modernism that were so much the rage in Paris in the 20's held no appeal for him. "Man Ray, that remarkable photographer, as far as I was concerned, should never have picked up a brush, and I hated Marcel Duchamp, that handsome aesthete, amateur, and parasite who was taking it easy at the house of Mary Reynolds," he writes in a passage that even today could easily earn Leonid a permanent bad name. With Bérard, Tchelitchew, and his brother Eugene Berman, he became part of what was known as a "neo-romantic" movement that set itself against many of the governing tenets of modernism. Oddly enough, it found favor in the United States among the curators of the new Museum of Modern Art in the 30's and it was as a votary of "neo-romanticism" that Leonid became known here even before he emigrated after the war.

The memoirs devoted to the 20's and 30's are not primarily interesting for their account of the Parisian art world, however. It is Leonid's private life that charms our interest—the family connections that remained important to him, but mainly the love affairs upon which he lavished his whole spirit.

The book concludes with the surprisingly hard-headed diaries Leonid kept during the war years when, after something of an idyll in the countryside, he was finally conscripted as a laborer helping to build fortifications and then dig trenches against the expected Allied invasion. Yet even in this grim experience, Leonid managed to retain something of his equable spirit, and he survived with his gift for the happy ending intact. With his first three worlds now only a memory, he sailed for America on a well-named Liberty ship to begin yet another new life.



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Modern Germany

THE GERMAN PROBLEM RECONSIDERED. By DAVID CALLEO. *Cambridge University Press. 239 pp. $11.95.*

GERMANY 1866-1945. By GORDON A. CRAIG. *Oxford University Press. 825 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by JOHN STARRELS

DAVID CALLEO's collection of essays, *The German Problem Reconsidered*, and Gordon A. Craig's *Germany 1866-1945* are but two of the latest expressions of continuing interest in contemporary German history, though no two books could be less similar in approach. On their intellectual merits, Craig easily has the better of it, but Calleo's volume—as the newest example of the "revisionist" school—will probably generate more controversy among students of the subject.

Calleo's overall view of the German question is not particularly

JOHN STARRELS, a new contributor, teaches government at the American University in Washington, D.C.

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novel or original. He argues that the explanation for German behavior should not be sought in any national characteristics peculiar to the German people, but rather in surrounding geographical and historical factors, and in the behavior of other nations toward Germany. Thus far at least, Calleo's view is a fairly conventional geopolitical one. If he is clearly partial toward Germany—as, for example, in his assessment of responsibility for the outbreak of World War I—he is still reasonably fair to the French and British, and his position remains arguable. But Calleo's interpretation of Hitler's role in both German history and world politics is another matter entirely. Here, under the protective guise of a supposedly "revisionist" approach, interpretation shades over into outright apologetics.

In general, the revisionist version of contemporary German history views the rise of Hitler and the triumph of National Socialism not as an extraordinary episode in German history, but rather as the drastic culmination of Germany's fatal incapacity to accommodate change at a decisive moment in the nation's history. What distinguishes revisionism in general from classical scholarship is an emphasis upon continuity rather than change, and a tendency to downplay the role of personality in affecting events. And where classical writers tend to adhere to chronological method, seeing historical developments in terms of phases or periods (as, for example, the period from 1939-45), proponents of revisionism like Geoffrey Barraclough, for example, make it a point to disdain chronology and construct interesting, if occasionally strained, parallels between the policies of such seemingly disparate figures as Bismarck and Brandt, or Hitler and Adenauer.

In the hands of a sensitive and erudite observer like Ralf Dahrendorf, revisionism can provide a fascinating series of "alternative" explanations of contemporary Germany history. In the hands of less sensitive practitioners, it becomes an instrument of drastic distortion and oversimplification—a kind of mechanical device for turning traditional judgments upside down. Thus, bent on overturning what he sees as the "Germanophobe" view of German "guilt," Calleo ends up with an equally drastic view of German "innocence."

WHEN Calleo addresses himself to the years between 1933 and 1945, his argument comes out sounding less like an attempt to explain German policies than an attempt to justify them. Whether he is talking about the outbreak of World War II—which he sees as resulting no less from British and American hostility toward the "upstart" Germans than from some unique German drive for world power—or about Germany's attack on Russia—which he sees as merely an extreme example of the traditional German desire for *Lebensraum*—the net effect is to exculpate Germany by attributing all of its policies from Bismarck to Hitler to the extreme vulnerability of Germany's historical and geographical position. Not only is Germany not an aggressor against the world order in Calleo's view; it is its victim.

The arguments Calleo constructs in support of his thesis are made especially difficult to evaluate by a peculiar stylistic confusion in the text between the author's own position and that of his historical characters. He has Hitler lamenting, for example, that Germany was "forever condemned to be in a hurry" in its pursuit of military hegemony in Europe. Since this happens to coincide thoroughly with Calleo's own thesis about Germany's "upstart" role in the international order, the reader is left wondering whether the idea is Hitler's or the author's.

The reader may also wonder why Calleo has chosen to base so much of his argument on a body of attitudes which, because they are held by him to be unconscious, cannot be proven one way or another. Calleo appears convinced that "beneath the level of articulate con-

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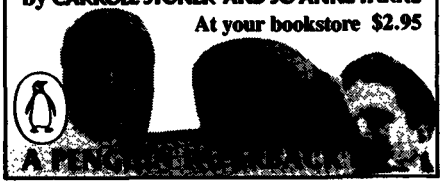

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sciousness" many scholars in Germany and outside of it harbor nasty stereotypes of the "bad German." Yet the single example he cites involves some negative remarks about the Germans supplied by the British historian, Sir Lewis Namier, in a review he wrote of A.J.P. Taylor's *The Course of German History* more than thirty years ago.

Finally, it may be possible to argue, as Calleo does, that the international aggression and genocide of the Hitler years cannot be blamed on qualities peculiar to the German character—the work of Robert Conquest and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn on the Soviet Union would seem to have suggested as much. Yet the common features shared by Nazi and Soviet totalitarianism actually have little to do with Calleo's ultimate point. It is one thing to cite mitigating factors in assigning blame to Germany, but it is quite another thing to lift the blame for World War II from Germany's shoulders and transfer it to those of the West, which Calleo's analysis ends up doing.

GORDON A. CRAIG's rendition of German history from unification to the destruction of the Third Reich is a grand tour in 800 pages by a master of the craft. Craig provides a comprehensive overview of Germany's political, economic, and cultural evolution during the period between unification and total military defeat in 1945.

One of Craig's outstanding qualities as a scholar is his gift for vivid portraiture. In contrast to the revisionist approach, Craig emphasizes the role of personality and character in history. Indeed, in his view, these are the forces which in the main have determined the course of contemporary German history. Thus, Craig writes of William II that he "had as much intelligence as any European sovereign and more than most, but his lack of discipline, his self-indulgence, his overdeveloped sense of theater, and his fundamental misreading of history prevented him from putting it to effective use. . . ." And of Hitler, in a scarcely veiled critique of the revisionist school's continuity thesis, Craig writes: "Both the grandiose barbarism of his political vision and the moral emptiness of his character make it impossible to compare him in any meaningful way with any other German leader. He stands alone."

In addition to his gift for portraiture, Craig also has the subtle ability to elucidate the connections among characters on the political stage and the larger context in which Germany functions as a nation. Craig is as sensitive as Calleo to the geopolitical constraints on Germany—his superb chapter on "Party Politics and Foreign Policy" chronicles and analyzes the fateful course of the Weimar Republic in the international arena—but unlike Calleo he is attentive to the elements of personal responsibility. political choice, and even random chance which are ignored by those who analyze Germany's fate as though it were predetermined from the outset.

It is regrettable that Craig does not directly engage the revisionist school in this book (and surprising, incidentally, that he fails to mention the Hitler-Stalin pact). Still, these thirty chapters offer inviting evidence of the distance between the two schools on the essential questions posed by historical analysis.

In all, *Germany 1866-1945* should satisfy some of the still undiminished passion of Americans for works dealing with the tragic but fascinating course of contemporary German history.

Art and the Revolution

A SEASON OF YOUTH: THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND THE HISTORICAL IMAGINATION. By MICHAEL KAMMEN. *Knopf. 384 pp. $15.00.*

Reviewed by PETER SHAW

THE differences between Michael Kammen's new book and his *People of Paradox*, which was published in 1973, reflect a sharp change in the climate of American intellectual life over the past five

PETER SHAW *teaches English at Stony Brook and is the author of* The Character of John Adams.

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years. Up until the early 70's, the shared political liberalism which had prevailed among intellectuals at least since World War II tended to keep disagreements among American historians from becoming acrimonious. But with the decline of liberalism in the 70's, followed by a polarizing of opinion into Left and Right, the tone of academic discourse has changed. It may well be, of course, that the contentious spirit of the 60's had as much to do with splitting apart the long-standing liberal consensus as any events of the 70's. If so, the legacy of that spirit is only now becoming apparent in works such as Kammen's. For there is a tone of complaint here, and a hostile attitude toward America, that previously could be found only among political radicals.

Though Kammen appears to have shifted to the position that any truly penetrating analysis of America must come from a radical perspective, he has not gone so far as to proclaim himself a political radical. Instead, he somewhat vaguely calls for a greater receptiveness to revolution. We should favor the extremism of Thomas Paine, and admire such politicians of the recent past as Henry Wallace. We should stop shying away from "that accursed French revolution," support current Third World revolutionism, and in general recognize, with the radical historian Gabriel Kolko, that the United States has futilely locked itself into a "permanent struggle against the mainstream of history toward the Left."

APART from its political assumptions, *A Season of Youth* may be described as a kind of high-powered Bicentennial museum catalogue of paintings, sculpture, and literature dealing with the American Revolution. Like the ambitious, interpretative *catalogues raisonnés* that have recently grown common, it uses art to arrive at cultural generalizations—in this case generalizations about the national character. As for the art itself, the fact is that in nearly two-hundred years America has produced no masterpieces in commemoration of the Revolution. Kammen is able to praise the painter Trumbull's "better scenes," the novelist James Fenimore Cooper's *Satanstoe*, and Whittier's poems on the Revolution. But he is not interested in analyzing any of these, any more than the scores of other minor works that he touches on. His purpose in conducting his guided tour among poetical commemorations of famous events and battles (Longfellow's "Paul Revere's Ride," Emerson's "Concord Hymn"), novels delineating the agony and bravery to be discovered among families affected by the Revolutionary War, and paintings of Washington either crossing or not crossing the Delaware, is not so much to describe and judge American art as to pro-

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nounce an adverse moral and political judgment on American society.

Kammen's chief complaint is that American writers and painters have tended to de-revolutionize the Revolution. What he means can be understood from his use of the term "a season of youth," which indicates not that America was young during the Revolution, but that art and literature have tended to conceive of the Revolution as a national coming of age. Novelists in particular have symbolized this by introducing into their works a young man in the act of breaking away from his parents. In order to become a man, this teen-aged youth usually must face some kind of test, often having to do with service in the Revolutionary War. He is frequently an orphan who must, like the newly mature nation, set out on his own in the world. Perhaps the most famous example of this theme in American literature is Hawthorne's much analyzed short story, "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," one of the few works which Kammen treats at length.

According to Kammen, the coming-of-age motif tends to make the Revolution appear as a natural and gradual human process, thereby denying its dynamic and upsetting implications. Since "one comes of age only once," he writes, the implication is that "having had our Revolution . . . we need not have another—ever again." There is an error of simplification here, even though the works in question, with the exception of "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," are themselves hardly complex. For coming of age is a more richly evocative theme than Kammen allows. As Hawthorne suggests in his story, a youth cannot break away from his parents without generating some degree of psychic violence; for this reason coming of age may imply upheaval and revolution quite as readily as continuity.

But more important than Kammen's error on a point of literary interpretation is his insistent politicizing, in which he reduces literature to propaganda. Thus he remarks about the coming-of-age theme:

> What I find objectionable about this dominant motif in our historical fiction is, first of all, that it has been prompted by such conservative motives; by defensive nostalgia, by elitism, by national chauvinism, by a sense of our moral superiority as a people, and by a desire to de-revolutionize the American Revolution.

High-minded as this sounds, it stands in awkward contrast to Kammen's routine praise for parodistic works.

Turning from literature to art, Kammen singles out "the irreverent Peter Saul," whose painting of George Washington and his men sinking into instead of getting across the Delaware is a supposedly amusing "rowdy parody of mock heroism." Yet only a few pages earlier, in another connection, Kammen has ringingly registered his objection to "a process of simplification that reduces the significance, grandeur, tragedy, and diversity of a major historical phenomenon to little more than a formulaic cliché." What it comes down to is that trivializing and vulgarizing are acceptable when they fault America, but not when they elevate it, when they are employed to serve radical ends, as in the propaganda art of the 30's, but not when they are employed to serve any other ends. For Kammen, intellectual respectability lies in exposing the "national sham and shame," or in parodying "the discrepancy between American rhetoric and sordid realities."

WRITING in a very different spirit in *People of Paradox*, Kammen maintained that the American Revolution held "manifold meanings," both radical and conservative. In that earlier book, when he came to take up the opposition between wealth and egalitarianism as it was posed by the American Revolution, he asked: "Was an equilibrium really possible between the two?" And he answered the question: "We still do not know." He arrived at this tentative statement after carefully considering the tension between the idea of equality on the one hand, and a principle based variously on wealth, property, or privilege on the other. He felt that equality itself "contained an inherent dualism," and that as part of its legacy the American Revolution left unresolved the question of whether the term guaranteed equality of opportunity or equality of condition.

In just five years Kammen has come to believe that there is an obvious solution to these issues, and that it amounts to a self-evident truth. "It seems significant to me," he writes disapprovingly, that "so many of the difficulties within our elusive sense of tradition derive from the competing pulls of elitism and egalitarianism. The latter is acceptable and admirable by definition; the former is not." Thus what was formerly a respectable debate about the American tradition has become a matter hardly worth discussing, and then only in loaded terms such as "elitism."

Given the change in Kammen's thinking, one might have expected him to offer a new analysis of post-Revolutionary American civilization. Instead, his views have to be gathered from passing comments. That America has somehow failed to realize its ideals with respect to its minorities, its immigrants, and its poor seem to be leading and unargued assumptions. In addition, these failures have been disguised by artists and historians who "subtly, steadily" de-revolutionized the Revolution. But exactly where the basic fault with America lies is never revealed.

Yet it is just insofar as Kammen feels that he can simply *assume* the failure of American ideals that he reveals the extent to which his attitude has become an intellectual stance. In the polarized 70's, not the voicing of an explicit ideology but a tone of complaint and disapproval has become typical of this stance. If the new rhetoric has proven to be less explicit and assertive than that of the 60's, it nevertheless expresses a more radical disillusionment. Its appearance in academic discourse suggests a coming period of politicized debate over scholarly questions. If that should prove to be the case, then Kammen's book will have been the harbinger of divisions in the academic world far deeper and of more lasting significance than those of the 60's.

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Socialism as a Doctrine

MAIN CURRENTS OF MARXISM. VOLUME I: THE FOUNDERS. VOLUME II: THE GOLDEN AGE. VOLUME III: THE BREAKDOWN. By LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI. *Oxford University Press. Vol. I: 434 pp. $19.95; Vol. II: 542 pp. $19.95; Vol. III: 548 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID GRESS

DESPITE the importance of Marxism as the official ideology of the Soviet Union and its vast popularity among Western intellectuals, there has not until now been available for the lay reader a detailed, knowledgeable, clearly written, and easily accessible account of the doctrine and the ideas and contributions of its main adherents. Such a work now exists in the form of three massive volumes single-handedly written by Leszek Kolakowski, a Polish philosopher currently a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. The fact that Kolakowski received his education in a country whose rulers claim allegiance to Marxism and the fact that he himself was a fervent believer for quite a long while only add to the intrinsic interest which a publication event of this magnitude must arouse.

Leszek Kolakowski was born in 1927 in Radom, southeastern Poland. After the war, he studied philosophy at the University of Warsaw, specializing at first in the principles of orthodox Communism itself. His first published articles, from the years 1950-54, reflect, in the words of Francois Fejto, "an intransigent rationalist dogmatism." (*L'héritage de Lénine*, Paris, 1977; I am indebted to Fejto for the biographical information of Kolakowski's career prior to 1968) He seemed well set on the road of accepted conformism until the

DAVID GRESS, a new contributor, is currently completing his doctorate in medieval studies at Bryn Mawr College. He is the author of a study of contemporary society and its problems which has been published in Denmark.

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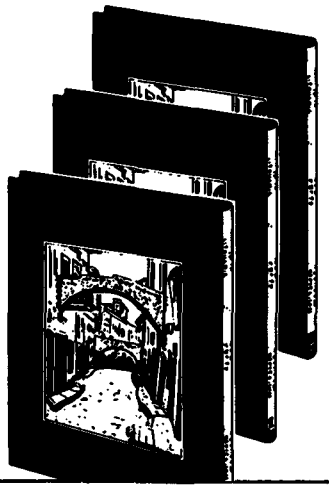

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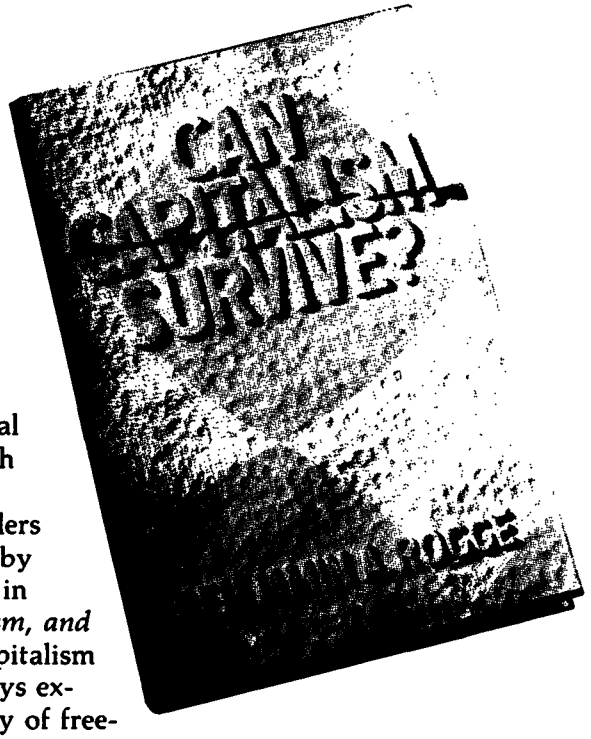

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wave of unrest and rebellion following the secret "de-Stalinization" speech given by Khrushchev at the 20th party congress in February 1956. Late that year, Kolakowski wrote a stinging critique of Stalinist socialism which was circulated clandestinely in Warsaw. Socialism, he said, is *not* "a state which always knows the mind of its subjects before asking them; a state in which philosophers and writers always say the same things as the generals and the ministers, and always afterward . . . a state which upholds the principle of forced labor . . . and which does not like to see its subjects read too many newspapers." He declined to define what socialism in fact was other than "a good thing."

This sort of satire was too much for the new Polish party boss, Wladislaw Gomulka, who had been allowed to seize power by the Russians precisely because he was not very liberal. In May 1957, Gomulka publicly accused Kolakowski of indiscipline and of propounding a form of socialism which was in fact nothing more than "a screen for a program based on bourgeois social-democratic theories." Kolakowski accepted the reprimand and returned to his studies in the history of philosophy. Instead of studying the "classics of Marxism-Leninism," however, he now devoted himself to the theory and practice of religious heresy, specifically in the 17th century, a subject on which he published a massive volume in French in 1969. He also made contact with anti-Stalinist Western Marxists, notably Edgar Morin and Jean Duvignaud in Paris, and contributed to their journal, *Arguments*. In 1966, as a consequence of these and other activities, he was expelled from the Communist party of Poland, and in 1968 his teaching privileges at the University of Warsaw were withdrawn. He took the logical consequence and left Poland, first for Canada and the United States and, in 1970, Oxford, where he has been based since.

IN HIS independent philosophical writings, apart from the work on religion mentioned above, Kolakowski has been concerned particularly with the issue of evil and injustice in the world (and the problems connected with the traditional Marxist answer to them), with the history and theory of rationalism, and with the continuing significance and importance of myth. His abandonment of orthodox Marxism did not come as a revelation or as an embarrassed admission of its insufficiencies; rather, it seems that after about 1956 and his political experiences of that year he simply had no further use for a doctrine which, whatever its other advantages, was so amenable to oppression and violence. Indeed, the malleability of Marxism, the fact that it can be used both to provide apparently reasonable and thorough answers to historical and social problems and to justify political terror and rigid class rule, became a crucial problem for Kolakowski and constitutes the very foundation of his major work to date, *Main Currents of Marxism*.

In his preface to this work, Kolakowski states succinctly its purpose and scope: "The present work is intended to serve as a handbook . . . it is not a history of socialist ideas, nor of the parties or political movements that have adopted one or another version of the doctrine as their own ideology." In other words, he is not providing a general "history of socialism," much less a wide-ranging intellectual and political history of modern times. Throughout, Kolakowski follows the same taut plan: each contributor to Marxism, from Marx and Engels themselves, via minor figures like Paul Lafargue or some of the fascinating Polish thinkers like Stanislaw Brzozowski, to Georg Lukács and Ernst Bloch, receives a brief sketch of his "life and works," followed by a more or less lengthy account of his views and doctrines. In the case of Marx himself, this account takes up several chapters, each dealing with a specific aspect of his thought: for instance, the nature of exploitation, or the motive forces of the historical process. The doctrinal account is not related by Kolakowski to the political or social developments surrounding the particular individual whose doctrine is being discussed, but he is hardly unaware of the connection; as he puts it, he wants rather to show the "connection between the development of the doctrine and its function as a political ideology." This means, in particular, that the thought of Lenin is described in such a way that its function as the legitimation of the Soviet state and of the rule of the Bolshevik minority is clearly described.

KOLAKOWSKI'S philosophical training and outlook have in large part determined his perspective—a fact which will no doubt render his work wholly unacceptable to Marxists. The introduction opens with the sentence, "Karl Marx was a German philosopher," and the work itself begins with a lucidly written account of the philosophical problem which has dominated Western thought, namely, the apparent contradiction between man's knowledge of Absolute Being and his awareness of his own finitude. The search for an end to this contradiction preoccupied Plato and determined the fundamental reflections of all major thinkers until Kant and Fichte. Starting from the idea that "man is not the same in his empirical being as he is in reality or in essence," philosophers tried to find man's true being either outside himself, outside humanity, or within the very process by which man develops in history. It was this latter perspective, held by Hegel, which led to the conception of Marx that humanity was "self-present as an Absolute *in its own finitude*," and to the "rejection of all solutions that involve man realizing himself by the actualization, or at the command, of an antecedent absolute being" (emphasis added).

Clearly this philosophical perspective excludes any claim that Marx merely discovered objective truths about society, which is what Marxists claim. Yet Kolakowski's approach is probably the only one which is not polemical one way or the other. He has not only avoided having to state or deny his personal belief in Marxism, he has also avoided the currently fashionable debate concerning Communism and Communist society: is it a continuation of true Marxism

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(which means that Marxism is either true and wonderful or wrong and hateful, depending on one's view of the Soviet Union), or is it a perversion? One aim of *Main Currents* is to show precisely how the doctrine propounded by Marx was taken up and interpreted by Lenin and Stalin, and how this interpretation came to fit the system they created. The question of whether this is "true" or "false" Marxism is an uninteresting one; what is important is that both Lenin and Stalin believed their views followed logically from those of Marx and were able to establish a powerful and violent state on that basis.

IN THE latter half of Volume II, *The Golden Age* (referring to the generation of the Second International, 1889-1914), and in Volume III, *The Breakdown,* Kolakowski cannot help at times becoming more polemical, or at least more involved with his subject. This is not because he abandons either his method of presentation (a brief biography of each thinker, followed by an account of his ideas) or his method of philosophical evaluation, but because his very observations at times become judgments. Of course, it is also the case that he himself was closely involved with some of the people, such as Georg Lukács and Ernst Bloch, whom he discusses (although he fails to mention himself, perhaps wrongly). Finally, he gives contemporary neo-Marxism very short shrift indeed: "Setting aside the difficulties already mentioned, I am not convinced that the subject is intrinsically worthy of treatment at such length."

When his observations become judgments it is usually because, being a trained student of philosophy and a firm believer in reason, he does not suffer fools gladly. In this, of course, he resembles Marx himself. I for one find nothing wrong with his evaluation of Herbert Marcuse (arrived at, let it be said, after 24 pages of exhaustive analysis): "There is probably no other philosopher in our day who deserves as completely as Marcuse to be called the ideologist of obscurantism." His reasons for this judgment are concise: everyone admits that there are problems related to modern society and the spiritual impoverishment connected with certain aspects of technology. But to deal with these problems the human race "must foster and establish values that make life more endurable and facilitate the rational consideration of social reforms, namely, the values of tolerance, democracy, and free speech. Marcuse's program is the exact opposite: to destroy democratic institutions and tolerance in the name of a totalitarian myth, subjecting science and technology . . . to a nebulous 'essential' intuition which is the exclusive property of philosophers hostile to empiricism and positivism."

THAT is about as much of Kolakowski's personal position as we ever get in *Main Currents,* and rightly so: the work is not a speculative treatise but, as he says, a handbook in the development of certain political and social theories. It can, therefore, be said that the author has succeeded in his purpose, which is to make available to the modern reader a straightforward account of the main representatives of Marxism and of their thought. Any genuine criticism of Kolakowski's impressive achievement must therefore address his presentation or his (few) judgments.

And there are problems, especially in Kolakowski's treatment of some 20th-century Marxists. In his short review of this work in the (London) *Sunday Times,* George Steiner, himself a highly perceptive and original student of modern society, writes that Kolakowski's own personal fate gives a "particular bitterness to the judgments he passes on his immediate predecessors and contemporaries." Steiner takes particular exception to Kolakowski's final judgment of Lukács, the Frankfurt School members, and Ernst Bloch. According to Steiner, Kolakowski failed to appreciate "the messianic hunger for justice, the prophetic obsession with a kingdom of equity on earth, which is central to Judaism," and, by extension, to those Jewish intellectuals who embraced Marxism such

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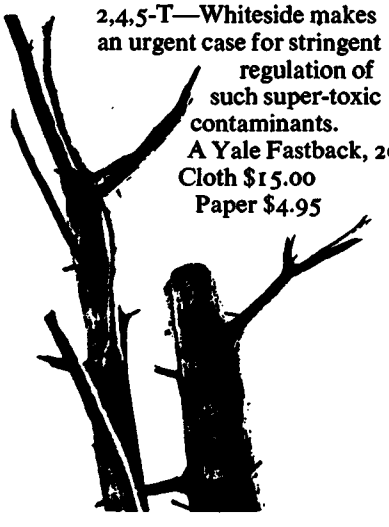

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as Lukács, Horkheimer, Adorno, and Bloch.

The belief in ultimate justice on earth is certainly both a traditional Jewish hope and also an integral part of a certain kind of Marxism. This is not, however, ignored by Kolakowski; indeed, his whole approach to Marx himself in the early pages of *The Founders* shows that he is acutely aware of the metaphysical and even mystical components of Marx's thought—components, incidentally, which have only really been known since the publication of Marx's early works. Furthermore, Kolakowski acknowledges in the preface to the whole work his partial indebtedness to Lukács—the only inspirational source cited by name, as far as I can tell, in the entire work. Finally, Steiner's criticism is directed against Kolakowski's incidental evaluation of Lukács's *literary* theory, which is not the subject of the 53-page chapter. Nor does Steiner quote Kolakowski's final judgment of Lukács's political career, which is far more significant: "Lukács is perhaps the most striking example in the 20th century of what may be called the betrayal of reason by those whose profession is to use and defend it."

STEINER argues that one should not condemn Lukács because he chose "internal exile." But Kolakowski does not do so. He does condemn Lukács for having supported and defended Stalinism long after it became possible to avoid doing so, and for never recanting a word of the praise he conferred on the regime of Rákosi in Hungary or of Stalin in the USSR. He likewise condemns Ernst Bloch (though in a milder vein) for continuing, even after his move to West Germany, to praise the East German and Soviet regimes, and even Stalin himself. Aptly, he compares Bloch to Martin Heidegger, although even in the (brief) days of his Nazi party membership Heidegger did not feel obliged to moralize on behalf of the regime in the same way. "Both men used their own characteristic concepts to buttress their loyalty to a totalitarian dictatorship, but the concepts themselves did not point in one direction more than another. The identification might equally have been the other way around: Bloch's category of 'hope' might have been used to glorify Nazism, and Heidegger's 'authenticity' (*Eigentlichkeit*) might have served the cause of Communist propaganda." Indeed so.

"Internal exile" need not—in fact, does not—imply that one must actively support the regime. Internal exile supposedly means distancing oneself from it, as was the case with the great historian Friedrich Meinecke during the Nazi period. No writing of his from the years 1933-45 betokens the least sympathy for Hitler; in 1945, when over eighty years old and in the midst of ruin and destruction, he was able to provide an analysis of the origins of Nazism more ruthlessly honest than most that have since appeared, in Germany or abroad. The case of Bloch or of Lukács is different. Not only did they not distance themselves from the regime at any time, they actively supported it and allowed themselves to be used by it. For such behavior, a single sentence of condemnation (following many pages of exhaustive analysis) is only fitting.

I HAVE emphasized the issue raised by Steiner—namely, that Kolakowski does not recognize the millenarian aspect of Judaism as it influenced many important Marxist intellectuals—because it is an important issue and because it shows rightly that we still lack extensive, sympathetic analyses of the intellectual and political history of the 20th century and the impact of events on sensitive, vulnerable individuals. But writing such history was not Kolakowski's purpose. He set out to write a handbook, and has succeeded admirably. It is to be hoped, in the interest of understanding and increased awareness, that it will find many readers.

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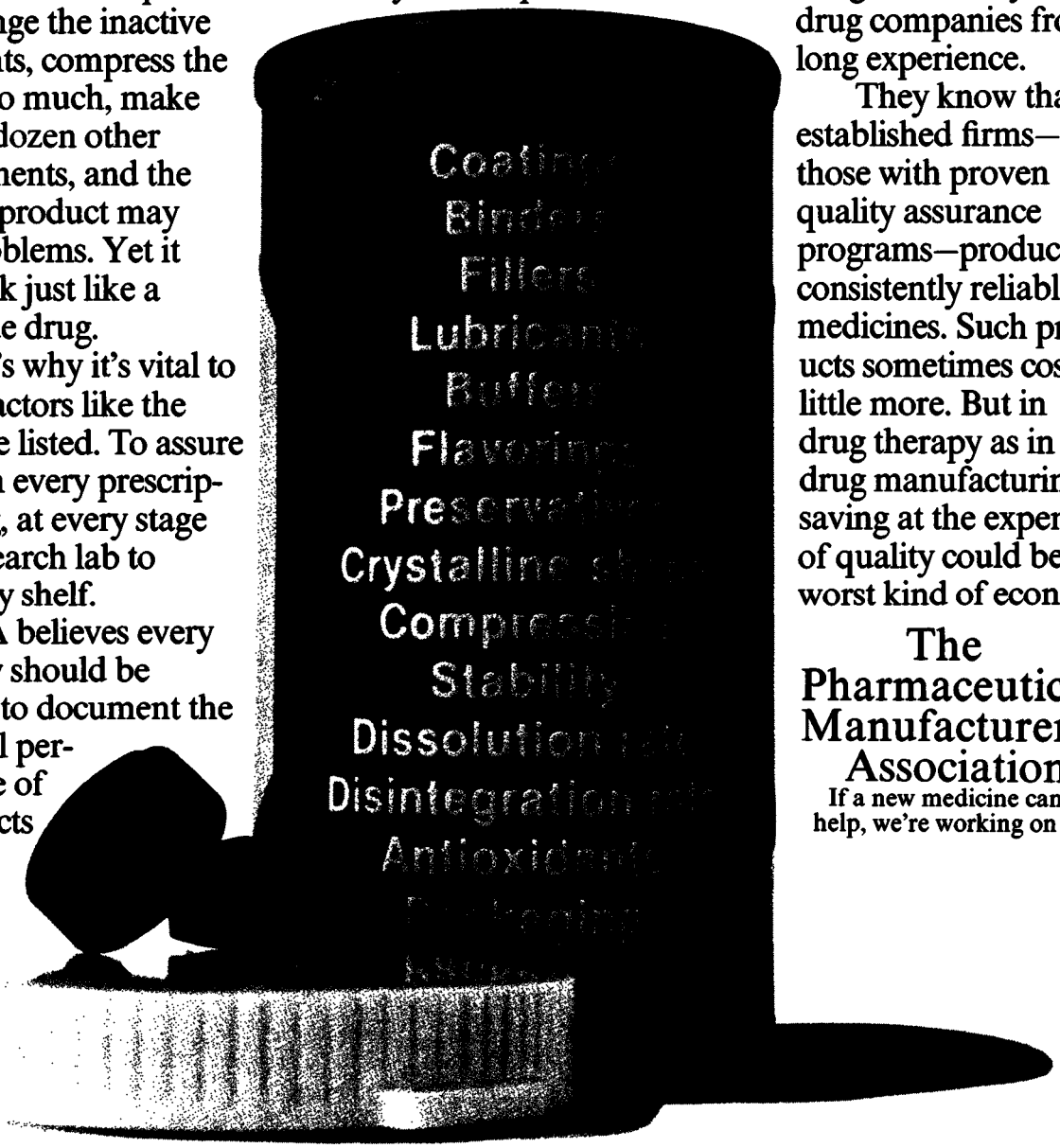

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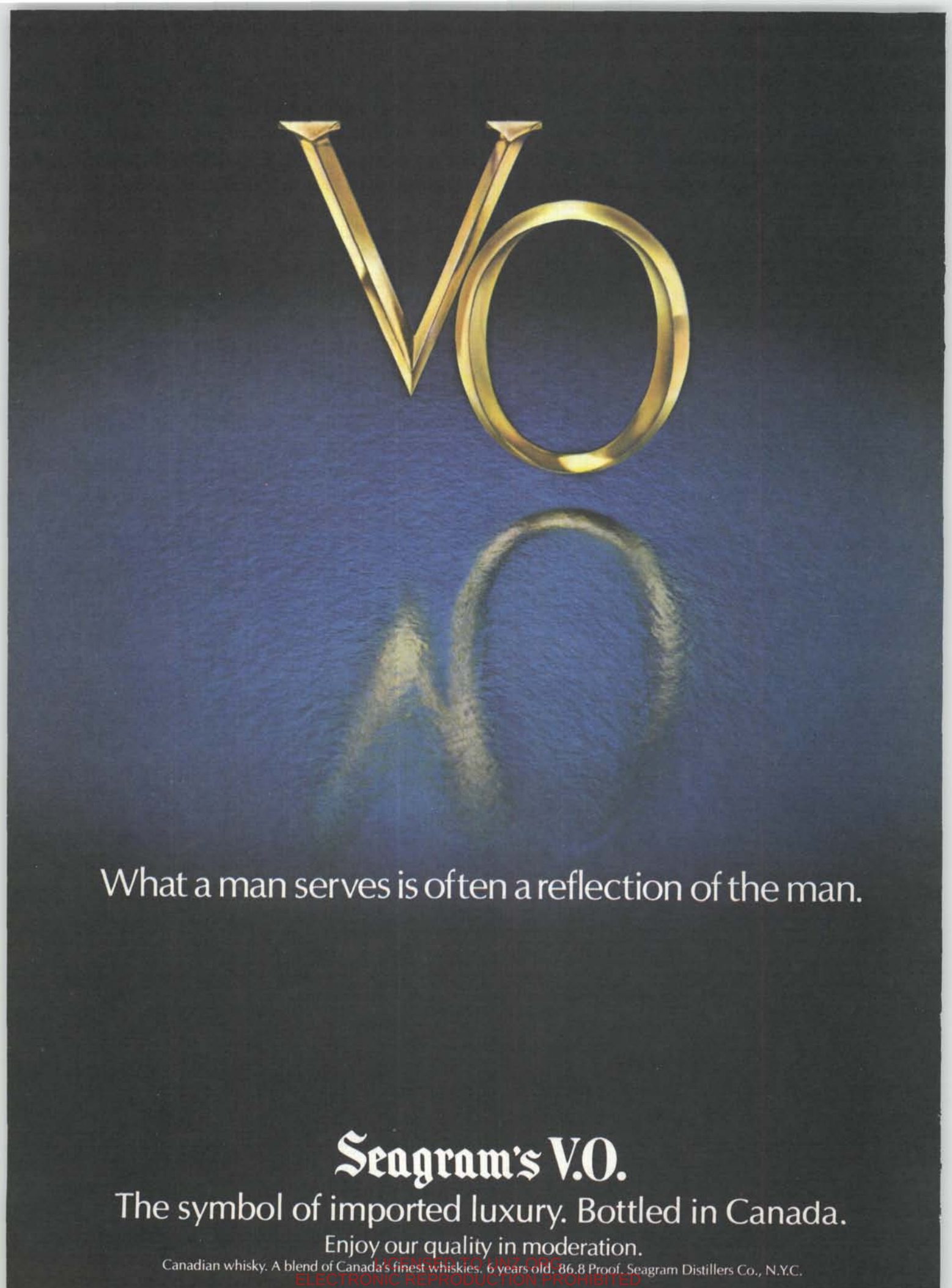
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